This document contains
the complete text of

El Otro Lado:

Considering the Impact of Education Abroad

on Host Families in Cuenca, Ecuador

a master's thesis by Søren M Peterson

The complete thesis, including individual chapters,
may be downloaded from the author's website:
www.SorenPeterson.com.

If you find this thesis helpful,
or if you cite it in your own work,
please e-mail the author at
speters5@du.edu.

EL OTRO LADO:
CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ABROAD ON HOST FAMILIES IN CUENCA, ECUADOR

_____

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

_____

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

_____

by
Søren M Peterson
March 2007
Advisor: Tracy Bachrach Ehlers

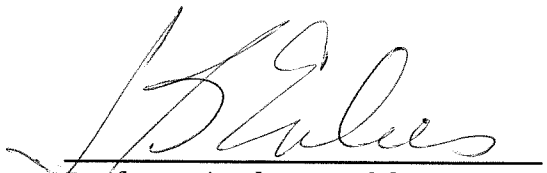
GRADUATE STUDIES

AT

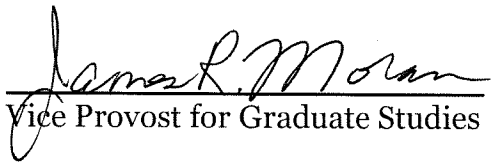
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Upon the recommendation of the chairperson of the Department of Anthropology, this thesis is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts



Professor in charge of thesis



Vice Provost for Graduate Studies

3/16/07

Date

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This thesis is an issue-driven study that reviews the scholarly analysis of host-guest interactions in the education abroad literature, which has shown a largely one-sided view of the impact on students.[1] Noting empirical research on tourism and acculturation that has demonstrated that cross-cultural encounters lead to impacts on both guests and hosts, I suggest that the education abroad literature needs to consider the host perspective as well. I then present the perspective of families in Ecuador who host foreign students to learn what they perceive to be the impact of hosting.

In November 2005, the US Senate declared 2006 the "Year of Study Abroad" (Murphy 2006). This declaration reflects the growing importance

1 For now, we can consider *education abroad* and *study abroad* to be essentially synonymous. Later in this chapter, I will provide a more nuanced understanding as I discuss the evolution of terms that have been used for the phenomenon.

of education abroad, in terms of the roles of US institutions of higher education and federal legislation, and is part of a widespread effort to increase the participation of US students in programs throughout the world. Although institutions such as Indiana University have offered short-term education abroad programs since 1879 (Hulstrand 2006b:48; Office of Overseas Study 2006), rapid growth in programs for undergraduate students did not occur until after World War I; even greater growth occurred following World War II and the start of the Cold War (Association of American Colleges 1960:1; Carter 1973:13; Hoffa 2002:57; Walton 2005). Walton notes that "before World War I, Americans who studied abroad were usually graduate students seeking scholarly or professional training in Europe that was not available in the United States" (2005:259).

Following World War I, Raymond W. Kirkbride, a French professor at the University of Delaware and a war veteran, proposed a year-long program in France for undergraduates (Walton 2005:259-260). Kirkbride initiated the Delaware Foreign Study Plan[2] with a group of eight students who sailed to France in July 1923 (Walton 2005:255). The program was designed so that students began their studies in the summer with intensive French language classes at a provincial university, after which they went to

2 Sweet Briar College took over the Delaware Foreign Study Plan in 1948 (Walton 2005:278). Since that time, the program has been known as the Sweet Briar Junior Year in France (Sweet Briar College 2006).

Paris for the academic year (Walton 2005:262).[3] During their time in France, students lived with host families. The Delaware Foreign Study Plan served as a model for later programs such as the Smith College Junior Year in France, which started in 1925 (Walton 2005:262-263).

After each World War, new education abroad programs were created out of "the hope that prospects for world peace and understanding ... would be increased if, during their formative years, young people were given opportunities to live and learn in each other's countries" (Hoffa 2002:57). In this respect, and especially following World War II, education abroad became "a major strategy in international education and world diplomacy" (Grünzweig and Rinehart 2002:5). Much of the growth in the late 1950s and 1960s was spurred or supported by federal legislation passed in response to the Soviet launch of *Sputnik* (Hines 2001:6; Wiley 2001:13). Such legislation included the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 and the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, more commonly known as the Fulbright-Hays Act (Hines 2001:6-7).[4]

The NDEA, whose objective was "to insure trained manpower of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the national defense needs of the

3 Students generally studied at the University of Paris (Sorbonne), which began offering special classes for foreigners in 1919 (Walton 2005).

4 In addition, the International Education Act (IEA) was passed in 1966 but never funded; nevertheless, it influenced the creation and expansion of programs in the 1970s (Hines 2001:8).

United States" (Hines 2001:6), was perhaps the most important piece of Cold War era legislation. The NDEA included a section, Title VI ("Language Development"), that created programs such as language and area studies centers (Hines 2001:6).[5] Many of these centers, including the nationally-recognized Center for the Study of Canada at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Plattsburgh,[6] became involved in developing education abroad programs, especially ones with a language focus. Indeed, Lambert (2001:41) notes that foreign language study became the de facto purpose for the creation of many education abroad programs.

The Junior Year Abroad model, exemplified by the University of Delaware/Sweet Briar College and Smith College programs, predominated education abroad during the first half of the twentieth century (Bowman 1987:13). However, by the 1950s, the Eurocentric Junior Year Abroad model was no longer typical; newer programs were based in a wider variety of locations and had shorter durations (Association of American Colleges 1960:5; Bowman 1987:13). Although the term "study abroad" was

5 In 1980, the US Congress amended the Higher Education Act of 1965 to incorporate Title VI of the National Defense Education Act (Wiley 2001:15).

6 I was the Assistant Study Abroad Coordinator at SUNY Plattsburgh from 2000-2001 (and Interim Study Abroad Coordinator from January to September 2001). At the time, the study abroad office was housed in the Center for the Study of Canada and overseen by the Director of Canadian Studies and International Programs. SUNY Plattsburgh offers summer French immersion programs at three sites in the province of Quebec (Montreal, Quebec City, and Chicoutimi), and Spanish language courses can be taken in Mexico through the university's exchange program at the Universidad de Monterrey or in a sustainable development program in Oaxaca.

coined in the late 1950s, it did not replace "junior year abroad" (JYA) in common usage until the 1980s (Bowman 1987:13). More recently, the term "education abroad" has gained acceptance as a result of the growing popularity of experiential (i.e., non-study) programs such as internships, volunteering, and service-learning.[7]

As I suggested above, most of the earliest education abroad programs took place in Europe; programs in Latin America and other parts of the developing world appeared much later. One of the leading pioneers of education abroad in Latin America was Indiana University. It created a summer program for education majors in Mexico in 1939, and a summer program for Spanish majors followed in 1952 (Office of Overseas Study 2006). In addition, Indiana was the first US university to venture into the southern hemisphere when it opened an academic year program in Lima, Peru, in 1959 (Office of Overseas Study 2006; Bowman 1987:16). Bowman (1987) notes that other programs opened in Latin America in the 1960s, including ones in Argentina (Colgate University), Colombia (University of California), Costa Rica (one by University of Kansas and another by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest), and Mexico (California State College and University System).

7 For example, NAFSA (a worldwide international education association) replaced its "Section on US Students Abroad" (SECUSSA) with a new "Knowledge Community for Education Abroad" during its restructuring in 2005. The term "study abroad" is still widely used; however, in this thesis, I have elected to use the newer, more inclusive term "education abroad."

Although US institutions started numerous programs in Latin America in the 1960s and early 1970s, by 1987 only 29 of those programs were still operating (Bowman 1987:53). The closure of many programs was due to economic crises and military dictatorships that plagued many Latin American countries (especially those in South America) in the 1970s.[8] Moreover, these difficulties delayed the opening of programs in some parts of Latin America. For example, Stephenson (1999:7) notes that Stanford University took the first group of US students to Santiago, Chile, only in 1990. The following year, Bill Culver from SUNY Plattsburgh inaugurated the first program to integrate US students into regular classes with Chilean students (Stephenson 1999:8).[9]

In 1962, Argentina was the only Latin American country to appear in the list of leading education abroad destinations for students worldwide (Carter 1973:48); 40 years later, four Latin American nations—Mexico, Costa Rica, Cuba, and Chile—are among the 20 countries receiving the most US students (IIE 2005a). As a region, Latin America is second only to Europe.[10] Although the percentage of US students studying in Latin

8 Furthermore, many programs, such as the Augustana College Summer Spanish Program, left Peru (or shut down) in the late 1980s due to the activities of Sendero Luminoso ("Shining Path"), a Maoist insurgency.

9 The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) started its own program in Santiago shortly afterwards (Stephenson 1999:8).

10 For academic year 2003-04, 60.9% of US students reported by the *Open Doors* survey studied in Europe; Latin America was a distant second with 15.2% (IIE 2005b).

America has not changed significantly in the last decade, the actual number of students nearly tripled, from just over 10,000 in 1993-1994 to nearly 27,000 in 2003-2004 (IIE 2005b).

During the same period, overall enrollment in education abroad programs increased at a slightly slower pace, from 76,302 in 1993-1994 (IIE 2006b) to an all-time high of 191,321 in 2003-2004 (NAFSA 2006:8). While the growth of the past decade is impressive, in late 2005 the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Fellowship Program ("Lincoln Commission")[11] challenged the education abroad field to increase enrollment to one million students annually by the 2016-2017 academic year (Durbin 2006:6). This goal represents more than a five-fold increase over current figures and signifies that the field of education abroad will need to grow even more rapidly in the next decade to meet the challenge. Moreover, the Lincoln Commission made clear its desire for further democratization of education abroad. In addition to this dramatic increase in overall participation, it called for the demographics of participants to be more in line with those of the overall undergraduate population and for more students to study in non-traditional locations such as South America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa (Durbin 2006:6).

11 Congress established the Lincoln Commission in 2004 to significantly expand the opportunities for US students to study abroad, especially in non-traditional countries (Durbin 2006:4). The Abraham Lincoln Fellowship Program, although not yet funded, is the latest in a series of recent federal initiatives for undergraduate education abroad that also include the David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship Program (1991) and the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship (2000).

As Durbin notes, the United States "is continuously threatened by a serious lack of international competence in an age of growing globalization. Our world ignorance is now seen as a national liability" (2006:4). Such a concern is not new. Many US institutions have created education abroad programs, often with the support of the federal government, with the goal of cultivating mutual understanding between countries. Indeed, the interaction between education abroad participants and members of host communities presents an exciting opportunity to study the dynamics of cross-cultural contact, yet the education abroad literature has focused almost solely on students. Bochner et al. (1979), Carlson and Widaman (1988), and others have studied whether students develop an understanding of other cultures as a result of participating in education abroad and other intercultural programs. Adler (1975), Nash (1976), and others focused on students' personal growth. More recently, the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) studied the long-term impact of education abroad on its alumni in such areas as language, intercultural understanding, and personal development (Dwyer 2004).

My review of the literature, facilitated by database searches (primarily Academic Search Premier) and bibliographies (e.g., Comp 2003; Learning Abroad Center 2004), uncovered only a handful of studies that address impacts, particularly sociocultural ones, on receiving

communities.[12] Stephenson (1999) appears to be the first to have studied impacts on host families. Her research in Santiago, Chile, also examined the sociocultural impact on education abroad students and Chilean university professors. Owen (1999) addressed the effects of international students on host families in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Sumka (2000 and 2001) analyzed the sociocultural impact of a summer program on host families in Quito, Ecuador.

Research on education abroad encompasses multiple academic fields, including anthropology, education, psychology, and sociology (Weaver 1989:1), and each of these disciplines logically examines the subject from a slightly different perspective. Nevertheless, as I noted above, scholars of education abroad—even anthropologists—generally have considered only one side of the cross-cultural encounter, focusing on the impacts on *students*.

The focus on students seems a deliberate one. Bochner et al. remarked that

> there is usually an implicit assumption, shared by everyone involved ... that the primary function of host nationals is to teach, advise, and supervise the transformation of the sojourner. From this perspective, there is little need to study the growth and development of host nationals exposed to

12 Skye Stephenson (1999) and Julie Levy (September 2004, personal communication), education abroad professionals at the School for International Training, and Shoshanna Sumka (2000), a graduate of the applied anthropology program at the University of Maryland, came to similar conclusions in their reviews of the literature.

> foreign students, since none is assumed or expected. [1979:31]

In contrast to this assumption, anthropological studies of tourism and acculturation suggest that cross-cultural contact between locals and visitors is not a one-way street. Acculturation theory, which has been used in both tourism and non-tourism settings, suggests that cross-cultural contact results in each group adopting at least some cultural traits from the other, resulting in an approximation of each culture toward the other (Nuñez 1989:266). This would suggest that education abroad programs are likely to have some kind of sociocultural impact on hosts. It is troubling that in the quarter-century since Bochner et al., only a few studies have attempted to learn about the impacts of education abroad on receiving communities (see Stephenson 1999; Owen 1999; Sumka 2000 and 2001; Levy 2002). This is lamentable for, as Stephenson (1999) and Sumka (2001) have noted, as a result of cross-cultural contact with students, hosts may develop a greater appreciation of their own culture and a better understanding of their guests' culture. Clearly, there is much to learn from studying hosts.

Drawing upon anthropological studies of tourism and acculturation, this thesis examines the literature's implicit assumption noted by Bochner et al. (1979) that education abroad programs do not have an impact on hosts. It does this by heeding Stronza's (2001:272) call for researchers to

involve groups on both sides of the encounter. To that end, I have integrated data from a variety of people, including current host families, former host families, language students, and key personnel of education abroad programs and language schools in Cuenca, Ecuador (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Location of Cuenca, Ecuador

As the field of education abroad seeks to democratize—by sending one million students abroad by 2016-2017, especially to non-traditional locations, and by recruiting more of them from previously underrepresented groups—we must consider how this growth might impact the communities that host our programs. By focusing on host families, this thesis will make a contribution to the emerging body of knowledge about the sociocultural impact of education abroad programs on host cultures, as well as to anthropological studies of host-guest relationships. My primary concern is to understand the sociocultural effects of cross-cultural contact on the carriers of the host culture, specifically, host families in Cuenca, Ecuador, to examine whether those effects do, in fact, occur in both directions. To that end, this study asks questions about what occurs in the encounter between host families and foreign students, what host families think about these encounters, and

whether host families perceive that hosting has resulted in sociocultural changes.

Thesis Overview

This thesis begins by demonstrating the one-sided nature of the scholarly analysis of host-guest interactions in the education abroad literature. In contrast to the literature's focus on students, I then show how scholars have studied host impacts in the context of tourism. Based on this evidence, I contend that the field of education abroad must consider how, and to what extent, programs impact receiving communities. In doing so, this thesis gives voice to host families, whose stories generally have not been heard previously, in an attempt to examine host-guest relationships from their perspective. My ethnographic analysis forms the bulk of this thesis, which is divided into two sections that provide background materials and a case study of host families in Cuenca, Ecuador. The final chapter provides a summary of the findings and conclusions of this study and offers suggestions for further research.

More specifically, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical and methodological concerns of this thesis, which draw largely upon the scholarly work of anthropologists and other social scientists who have

investigated the sociocultural and economic impacts of tourism on local communities. In the chapter, I outline previous scholarly research on education abroad, the anthropology of tourism, and acculturation. I contend that, as Sumka (1999) proposed, education abroad is a form of *academic tourism*.[13] In considering methodological issues, I briefly discuss theoretical approaches that give voice to those whose stories previously have not been heard. Finally, I discuss the nature of my fieldwork in Ecuador and the methods I used for my data collection.

Chapter 3 presents the background materials required to contextualize the ethnographic discussion and analysis that follow in later sections of the thesis. I begin with a brief ethnographic sketch of Cuenca, Ecuador, and then discuss education abroad programs, language schools, and homestays in Cuenca. This material sets the stage for the discussion of my ethnographic fieldwork.

Chapter 4 discusses the ethnographic fieldwork I conducted in Cuenca in 2005 (June-August and November-December). The chapter is based on both primary data and secondary materials I collected in Cuenca, including interviews with host families, students, and key personnel of education abroad programs and language schools, as well as tourism brochures, demographic data, and scholarly articles.

13 Sumka (1999) uses the term "responsible tourism."

The thesis concludes with Chapter 5, in which I summarize the findings of my research, discuss the contributions and limitations of my study, and suggest topics for further research.

Chapter 2: Theory and Method

Review of the Literature

Introduction

In this section, I provide a brief overview of the education abroad and anthropology of tourism literatures as they relate to this thesis. Following this overview, I then discuss each body of literature in more detail, providing examples of the various concepts that, linked together, created the framework for designing my research and analyzing the data that I collected. As we will see, the education abroad literature provides the student (i.e., guest) perspective. From the large and growing tourism literature, I have chosen work pertaining to the host perspective. By including both perspectives, I have attempted to heed Stronza's call "to learn more about the dynamics of host-guest interactions by observing and talking with people on both sides of the encounter" (2001:272).

As mentioned before, with only a few recent exceptions, previous scholarly research on education abroad impacts has considered *only one side* of the cross-cultural encounter, that is, the outcomes or consequences that *students* experience. From the broad literature on education abroad, I have chosen work that examines how such intercultural exchange impacts participants. Some researchers (Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988) have studied students' development of an international perspective or understanding (i.e., knowledge of—and concern for—issues of international significance, interest in—and understanding of—other cultures, etc.). Other scholars (Martin 1987; Stier 2003) have focused on students' intercultural competence (i.e., acquisition of functional skills such as language proficiency), while Adler (1975) and others have looked at students' personal growth or heightened self-awareness.

George Gmelch, a cultural anthropologist, noted that educational psychologists have conducted most of the scholarly research on education abroad impacts (2004:419). As well, Dennison Nash—an anthropologist well-known for his work on tourism—made a similar observation, writing that psychology has produced a significant body of research on "sojourner adjustment" (1996:40). Indeed, several of the authors discussed in the education abroad section below are scholars of either education or psychology (e.g., Adler 1975; Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988; Stier 2003). However, anthropology has not ignored education

abroad entirely, although as with the education abroad literature, in general, the focus has similarly been primarily on students (see G. Gmelch 2004; Nash 1976 and 1996; also, S. Gmelch [2004] briefly mentions study abroad and tourism). A notable exception is Shoshanna Sumka (2000 and 2001), an applied anthropologist who examined the impact of an education abroad program on host families in Quito, Ecuador.

Studies of tourism demonstrate that both hosts and guests are valid and useful subjects, providing a more holistic sense of the impact of the encounter. Anthropological studies (e.g., McLaren 2003; Smith and Brent 2001) have shown that tourism can have sociocultural, economic, and environmental effects on receiving communities. These impacts may be positive or negative (or mixed), depending on who controls tourism activities and what type of tourism is involved. In general, mass tourism tends to have negative impacts such as environmental degradation, leakage of economic benefits, and commodification of culture (Brown 1998; Chambers 2000; Lea 1988; Mathieson and Wall 1982; McLaren 2003). However, scholars also suggest that, in some cases, tourism may actually have positive impacts, as the presence of tourists may encourage communities to preserve unique natural areas or structures of historical significance (Chambers 2000; Lea 1988). In addition, tourism may lead to locals "rediscovering" their heritage as they become "tourists" of their own culture (Esman 1984).

Such research demonstrates that tourism is not always bad for receiving communities; nevertheless, mass tourism remains largely associated with negative sociocultural impacts (Brown 1998; McLaren 2003; Stronza 2001). Smaller-scale responsible tourism addresses these issues and tries to minimize negative sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts by offering a more equal, beneficial exchange and by giving locals greater control over their own tourism destinies.

One of the primary frameworks for anthropological studies of tourism has been the host-guest encounter itself. Specifically, anthropologists have studied the nature and degree of host-guest interactions (Chambers 2000; Mathieson and Wall 1982; Smith and Brent 2001), the types (and motivations) of tourists (Cohen 1979; Smith 1977), and locals' perceptions of tourists (Kohn 1997; Waldren 1997). In short, anthropological studies have furthered our understanding of the sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism on receiving communities, and anthropology can make a similar contribution to education abroad, especially in terms of sociocultural impacts and host motivations. Notably, Sumka (2000 and 2001) used the host-guest framework in her study of the impact of education abroad on host families. In addition, she also proposed education abroad as a form of responsible tourism, because it strives for an equal exchange between hosts and guests (Sumka 1999 and 2000).

Education Abroad

Much of the education abroad literature has been published from an assessment perspective (e.g., Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988; Dwyer 2004; Gray et al. 2002). As such, it asks questions that help researchers measure the extent to which programs achieve the stated goals of professionals and other administrators. In particular, those measurements have focused on student learning outcomes. Since education abroad professionals generally view programs through a lens that focuses on the development of students in both academic and personal terms (Carlson and Widaman 1988:1; Gray et al. 2000:47), the literature logically has focused on the impacts on students, which include the development of an international perspective or understanding, intercultural competence, and personal growth.[14]

In the late 1970s and 1980s, scholars noted an assumption in the literature that education abroad leads to the development of international mindedness and international understanding (Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988). Carlson and Widaman defined this concept as

14 Gray et al. note that while anecdotal success stories once were sufficient for justifying the existence—and support—of education abroad programs, now "institutions with these programs are being asked to produce evidence that they contribute to student learning and development" (2002:45). To that end, in 2000 Missouri Southern State College implemented an assessment program to determine whether students were meeting the institution's international learning and personal development objectives (see Gray et al. 2002).

"knowledge of and awareness about issues of national and international significance [and] sensibility to international issues, people, and culture" (1988:2). More important, these scholars pointed out that there was a lack of empirical research to support anecdotal claims of such an impact, and both groups set out to remedy the situation. Bochner et al. (1979) suggested several possible reasons for the lack of empirical data, including uncritical presumptions about outcomes by education abroad professionals and the complexity of defining—and, therefore, evaluating—criteria such as mutual understanding.

Both Bochner et al. and Carlson and Widaman used quasi-experimental designs to test the hypothesis that cross-cultural contact leads to the development of an international perspective.[15] In these studies, the researchers concluded that students showed greater development of an international perspective following a cross-cultural experience, but they also questioned whether programs could actually claim the credit. Carlson and Widaman suggested that participants might have exhibited this outcome had they stayed home, and Bochner et al. wondered whether programs were simply "preaching to the converted" (1979:40). By this, Bochner et al. meant that perhaps programs were

15 Bochner et al. (1979) compared a study group of alumni of the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii with a control group of alumni who had not participated in the center's programs. Similarly, Carlson and Widaman (1988) compared a study group of University of California students who spent their junior year abroad to a control group that remained on campus during that time.

merely attracting students who already had a positive orientation toward other cultures and that, to truly claim credit for creating an international perspective, international educators needed to reach out to students who did not have such an orientation already.

Martin (1987) and Stier (2003) both studied intercultural competence as an outcome of cross-cultural contact; however, they varied in the approach used. Whereas Martin categorized intercultural competencies into three areas—cognitive skills, affective or personal qualities, and behavioral competencies—Stier distinguishes between content knowledge and processual skills. Content competencies refer to factual knowledge (e.g., history, language, customs, etc.) about the host culture, as well as the student's own culture. Processual competencies refer to cognitive skills such as perspective alteration, self-reflection, and problem solving. Although they used different categories, both scholars are referring to the same kinds of outcomes: greater self-confidence, a more open mind or greater tolerance for other ways of thinking, mutual understanding, and respect for people from other cultures.

Both Martin and Stier concluded that previous intercultural experience does, indeed, have a positive relationship to intercultural competence, but Martin questioned whether certain affective or interpersonal competencies might actually be outcomes of the normal maturation process and not directly attributable to an intercultural

sojourn. Stier's distinction between content and processual competencies is significant. He suggests that becoming competent, or functional, in another culture requires going beyond the foundation of content knowledge and getting inside the heads of people from the other culture (i.e., developing processual skills), not unlike what the anthropologist does in the field.

In addition to outcomes such as an international perspective and intercultural competence, research also has focused on personal growth or development. Adler (1975) developed a model of transitional experience to explain the psychological processes involved in culture shock[16] and their implication for personal growth. He defined culture shock as anxiety resulting from "loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture" (Adler 1975:13). Although culture shock generally has a negative connotation (e.g., some refer to it as an illness or disease), in some individuals it provides an opportunity for cultural learning and personal growth (Adler 1975:13-14). This is because individuals generally are not aware of their own cultural values and beliefs until a cross-cultural experience brings these values and beliefs into perception, and perhaps even into conflict with those of the host culture (Adler 1975:14). With this

16 Notably, it was an anthropologist, Kalervo Oberg, who popularized the concept of culture shock (Nash 1996:40).

heightened self-awareness, what began as learning about another culture evolves into learning about one's own culture and oneself (Adler 1975:19).

Nash (1976) also examined personal development in his study of education abroad participants in France. Using an experimental design, he tested five hypotheses related to self-realization, which he noted was commonly cited by professionals as a goal of education abroad programs (Nash 1976). Notably, Nash remarked that although numerous anecdotal claims had been made about the outcomes of education abroad, "attempts to assess these claims have produced ambiguous results" (1976:193). Indeed, Nash's (1976) own research produced mixed results. His study confirmed that education abroad participants become more autonomous, develop a more expanded or differentiated sense of self, and become less alienated from their bodies and feelings (Nash 1976:196-197). However, Nash (1976:198) also refuted claims by others that contact with locals leads to more favorable attitudes towards the host country and that learning new ways leads to greater tolerance or flexibility. As well, he also rejected the hypothesis that education abroad participants become more self-confident; in fact, his data suggested that self-confidence may actually *decline* in some cases (Nash 1976:199).

Nash's initial assessment, which he administered at the end of the program, demonstrated that certain aspects of self-realization are outcomes of an education abroad experience; however, a follow-up

assessment suggested that those outcomes may not persist for even a few months after returning home. Finally, Nash noted that "expansion or differentiation of self [on the part of students] ... takes place within the process of acculturation or transculturation with French culture" (1976:197), thus suggesting an interconnection between hosts and guests.

In reviewing the literature, it seems that there is an apparent disconnect between the unquestioned belief by professionals that education abroad leads to certain beneficial outcomes (e.g., an international perspective or a greater tolerance of others) and the empirical evidence produced by scholars, particularly that which has used experimental designs (e.g., Nash 1976; Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988). Remarks such as the following are representative of the beliefs held by many in the field of education abroad:

> "It is widely recognized that a study abroad experience has professional and personal benefits for any student." —Mel MacCarthy, Manager of International Programs, London Metropolitan University [Loveland and Murphy 2006:31]

> "Study and work abroad can be important in making American graduates more competitive by increasing their understanding of other cultures, and their ability to interact positively and productively with them." —William Nolting, Director of International Opportunities, University of Michigan International Center [Loveland and Murphy 2006:33]

Often, remarks such as these are based on anecdotal evidence such as the professional's own experience as a student abroad. As Bochner et al. (1979) and Carlson and Widaman (1988) suggest, the empirical evidence does not always support these claims as forcefully as professionals would hope.

The Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) recently conducted a non-experimental longitudinal study of its alumni that confirmed beliefs that education abroad offers beneficial academic, personal, and professional outcomes (Dwyer 2004). Based on quantitative data from IES alumni, the results suggested "a significant impact ... in the areas of continued language use, academic attainment measures, intercultural and personal development, and career choices" (Dwyer 2004:161). However, as Dwyer herself cautions, since the IES study was non-experimental, it can suggest only *correlations* and not causes.

In contrast, quasi-experimental research—such as that conducted by Bochner et al. (1979) and Carlson and Widaman (1988)—has suggested that while such outcomes do occur, education abroad programs may not be able to claim credit for this development. Such concerns are based on the problem of self-selection, which means that students who choose to go abroad are ones who may already be predisposed to certain outcomes (Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988), and on obtaining

similar results from both study and control groups, which researchers suggest might be due to the normal maturation process (Martin 1987).

Although these older, quasi-experimental studies suggest that we may have been simply "preaching to the converted" as Bochner et al. (1979:40) wrote, education abroad has undergone a significant democratization in the last decade (Dwyer 2004). Campuses across the country have established education abroad offices, expanded their offerings of short-term programs, and begun to require that all students of certain majors study abroad.[17] These efforts mean that education abroad programs are reaching out to new groups of students, and it is plausible that these students may not be as predisposed to an international perspective as previous participants were. Education abroad is also undergoing democratization because of a shift, especially with short-term programs, to non-traditional destinations, where receiving communities have less experience with foreign students. Moreover, as I noted earlier, the Lincoln Commission has called for even further democratization of education abroad by sending even more students, especially minorities, to places other than Europe (see Durbin 2006).

17 Goucher College, located in Baltimore, Maryland, recently decided to require *all* students (starting with those who enter in Fall 2006) to go abroad at least once in order to graduate. It is the first college in the United States to do so (Goucher College 2006), but others are certain to follow, especially if Goucher's policy proves successful.

Although scholars have studied education abroad for decades, in the last decade there has been what Hulstrand (2006a) calls an "explosion" of research by professionals, faculty, and students. William Brustein, Director of the University Center for International Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, suggests that some of the more recent research may be an outgrowth of the post-9/11 emphasis on international education (Hulstrand 2006a:52).[18] As well, I believe that some of the growth no doubt is related to the establishment of *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* in 1995 (Frontiers 2006), and the creation of a new professional organization, the Forum on Education Abroad ("The Forum"), in 2002 (Forum 2004). *Frontiers* is an annual that publishes peer-reviewed articles describing results of empirical research on education abroad (e.g., Stephenson 1999). The Forum lists research among its goals, although its specific emphasis has been on collecting enrollment data and assessing student learning outcomes (Forum 2004).[19]

In addition, the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, a scholarly journal of the Association for Studies in International Education (ASIE), regularly publishes reports of research on education abroad (e.g., Bolen 2001). As well, *Transitions Abroad*, a bi-monthly magazine about

18 Indeed, "internationalization" has been one of the major buzzwords on campuses in the last decade, a period that has seen tremendous growth of education abroad, both in terms of programs offered and students participating in such opportunities.

19 Karen Becker, Associate Director of Study Abroad at the University of Denver, first pointed out to me the Forum's emphasis on research activities.

educational travel and work opportunities abroad, has also published shorter articles on education abroad research (e.g., Dwyer and Peters 2004; Sumka 1999 and 2001).

Some of the recent research includes longitudinal studies of impacts on students' personal and career development, as well as studies of underrepresented student populations (e.g., African-Americans) and disciplines (e.g., engineering), and short-term programs (Hulstrand 2006a). Hulstrand also cited several questions in need of research, including why the profile of education abroad participants remains largely unchanged (and unrepresentative of home campus demographics), and what models might be implemented to improve students' experiences.

The fact that *International Educator*—a NAFSA[20] publication—reviewed current education abroad research is significant, because as consultant Carl Herrin noted, "we're so busy day to day doing the basic student services and recruitment activities that not enough of us are paying attention to what our colleagues are learning and publishing" (Hulstrand 2006a:55).[21] However, there is no mention in Hulstrand's article of any research concerning impacts on receiving communities,

20 NAFSA: Association of International Educators is the preeminent membership organization for professionals in education abroad, international student admissions, and other aspects of international education.

21 The recently established Teaching, Learning and Scholarship Knowledge Community within NAFSA is addressing this issue by organizing conference sessions and disseminating information about current research.

which might suggest that such questions still remain largely off the radar of researchers and professionals in the field.[22] As well, such research has not been on the agenda of the Forum, nor has *Frontiers* published articles on host impacts, with the notable exception of Stephenson (1999). In addition, a few years ago *Transitions Abroad* published an article about impacts on host families in Quito, Ecuador (see Sumka 2001).

As should be evident from the preceding discussion, the education abroad literature has, for the most part, not considered the impact of programs on receiving communities. Even Nash (1976), an anthropologist, made no mention of any impact that students in France might have had on their hosts. His study focused on a variety of sociocultural impacts on students, including the outcome of their interactions with hosts. Some scholars (Bochner et al. 1979; Stier 2003) have mentioned hosts, but only briefly, and not in the context of the effects that cross-cultural experiences have on them. Further, Bochner et al. noted an implicit assumption in the literature that hosts are involved in education abroad primarily to teach guests and that host growth or development is neither assumed nor expected. Similarly, Stier mentioned hosts, not in terms of cross-cultural effects on them, but rather in terms of

22 Nevertheless, professionals are interested in this topic. At the 2006 NAFSA Conference, I did a poster session on my research and received numerous encouraging comments that research on host impacts was needed. Additionally, several people remarked that they had examined host impacts (e.g., on host national students) at least briefly in their own research.

the unique competencies and expertise they contribute to the education of students.

Education abroad professionals have only recently begun to ask whether—and how—programs impact receiving communities (Julie Levy, School for International Training, personal communication, September 2004; Shoshanna Sumka, personal communication, October 2005), and even fewer have focused specifically on host families. Stephenson (1999) appears to be the first to have addressed the impacts on host families. She explored the impacts on all parties involved in an education abroad program, including students, host families, and professors in Santiago, Chile. Stephenson noted that the strongest impact on host families was "reaffirming their own sense of being Chilean and in gaining a deeper appreciation of their own culture" (1999:35). Sumka (2001) reached a similar finding in her research with host families in Quito, Ecuador. Other perceived changes included the family spending more time together, siblings fighting less, children being jealous of students, children becoming less timid, the family worrying about female students, and the family feeling a sense of extra responsibility (Sumka 2001).

Sumka's (2001) findings are consistent with anthropological studies of tourism, which have shown that hosts—and not only guests—experience sociocultural impacts. As we will see in the next section, that research suggests that when two cultures come into contact, borrowing of cultural

traits occurs in *both* directions, resulting in each one becoming somewhat like the other (Nash 1996:92; Nuñez 1989:266; Spindler 1977:8). Such research challenges the validity of the aforementioned implicit assumption that Bochner et al. (1979) noted in the education abroad literature—that is, that researchers neither assume nor expect host growth or development.

Anthropology of Tourism and Acculturation

Previously, I noted that, in contrast to the education abroad literature, anthropological studies of tourism have placed greater emphasis on hosts, framed especially in terms of host-guest relationships (Chambers 2000; Smith and Brent 2001). Anthropologists have studied tourism around two main themes—origins and impacts (Stronza 2001:262)—as well as the host-guest encounter (Aramberri 2005; Mathieson and Wall 1982:133). Research on the origins of tourism has focused on tourists, with scholars asking who is a tourist, what motivates someone to become a tourist, and why tourists seek particular types of places and experiences (Stronza 2001:262 and 265). On the other hand, studies of impacts have focused on host communities (Stronza 2001:262), with anthropologists examining tourism primarily as an agent of social or cultural change (Nash and Smith 1991:13). Nash (1996:59) sees this bias toward host impacts as the result of anthropologists' tendency to look at

tourism from the perspective of acculturation or development, while Wallace suggests that anthropologists connected the growth of tourism with globalization and “almost without thinking ... began to study the 'impact of tourists and tourism' on local communities” (2005:7).

In addition to culture change, tourism provides an ideal context for studying several major issues of concern to cultural anthropologists, including political economy, cultural identity and expression, and cross-cultural encounters (Stronza 2001:261 and 264). Nevertheless, anthropology was slow to take up the study of tourism, perhaps because scholars viewed it as frivolous and, therefore, unworthy of serious research (Nash 1981:461; S. Gmelch 2004:7), or because anthropologists did not want to be associated with pleasure-seeking tourists (Wallace 2005:5).

Publications in the 1960s and 1970s by Theron Nuñez, Erik Cohen, Nelson Graburn, Dean MacCannell, and Dennison Nash, as well as compendia edited by Valene Smith and Emanuel de Kadt, helped to make tourism a more serious and respectable subject of inquiry (Chambers 2000:2; S. Gmelch 2004:7; Nash 1981:461, and 1996:1 and 4; Smith and Brent 2001:7; Wallace 2005:7). Nuñez's (1963) analysis of rural-urban acculturation through *weekendismo* in Mexico generally is considered the first anthropological study of tourism (Nash 1996:1; Smith 1977:1); however, tourism as a subject of anthropological inquiry did not gain momentum until more than a decade later (S. Gmelch 2004:7; Graburn

and Jafari 1991:4; Nash 1996:4). The acceptance of tourism as a legitimate subject for scholarly research coincided with anthropology's shift from the treatment of societies as timeless and isolated groups to an interest in the processes and encounters that link cultures (S. Gmelch 2004:4; see Wolf [1982] for an enlightening discussion on this topic).

Scholars have categorized tourists by focusing on three distinct areas: tourists' motivations for travel (Smith 1977), meaning of the visit for tourists (Cohen 1979), and locals' perceptions of tourists (Kohn 1997; Waldren 1997). These areas are interrelated: tourists' motivations for travel (and the meanings that they expect the experience to offer) influence their behavior and their degree of interaction with locals. In turn, this affects locals' perceptions of tourists. Most tourists have a limited, short-term presence in a tourism site (Lea 1988), which they generally view as a place for relaxation, meditation, or self-discovery (Waldren 1997). Tourists may also view a tourism site in terms of the opportunities it offers for cultural learning or souvenir shopping (Waldren 1997). If tourists' expectations are met—for example, if they have enough hot water and clean towels—they usually perceive tourism in a positive light (Lea 1988).

MacCannell (1976) theorized that tourists are in search of authenticity, which is lacking in their lives at home. However, scholars generally consider mass tourism as less than a genuine experience, citing

examples such as the tourist who drives through a Native American village without stopping, only to buy a Chinese-made rubber tomahawk in a gift shop farther down the road (Chambers 2000:19). As well, a tourist visiting the indigenous handicraft market in Otavalo, Ecuador, might see a vendor wearing a baseball cap, a pair of Levi's, and a belt with a Marlboro buckle and label him a non-native, even though he maintains other cultural practices, such as speaking Quichua (in addition to Spanish and English), and self-identifies as an authentic *otavaleño*. Examples such as these would suggest that tourists are actually in search of what they perceive—or *mis*perceive—to be authentic and when confronted with a reality that is incongruous, they are likely to judge it as *inauthentic* (Chambers 2000).

MacCannell (1976:169) also noted that tours are circular structures —that is, the tourist's final destination is the same as his point of origin (i.e., home). Similar to the observation that a cross-cultural experience can bring an individual's values and beliefs "into perception" (Adler 1975:14), MacCannell suggests that this circular structure can result in tourists beginning to notice "tourist" things at home. As he declared, "the edge of the tourist world is in every tourist's town" (MacCannell 1976:169). Likewise, as Esman (1984) concluded, interaction with tourists can result in locals noticing "tourist" things in their communities. As we will see in

Chapter 4, host families in Cuenca sometimes learn new things about their own culture from the students they host.

Locals also participate in tourism, as direct or indirect "hosts," for different motives and to unequal degrees (Chambers 2000; Stronza 2001). To illustrate this point, one might think of a hotel housekeeper who interacts very little with guests and whose motivation is simply to earn a living. For her, the economic benefit of employment likely outweighs any concerns about potential sociocultural or environmental impacts of tourism. In contrast, someone with extensive knowledge of an area's culture, history, or natural resources might work as a tour guide and interact directly with tourists. For her, concerns about potential environmental and sociocultural impacts may weigh equally with (or outweigh) economic benefits.

Locals are motivated to participate in, or to support, tourism for various reasons, of which the most common may be economic development (Chambers 2000; Lea 1988). Those who participate in tourism directly may see the economic development it offers as job creation, while those who do not participate directly (but who support tourism) may see it as a source of revenue for the community. Another motivation is the prestige a local can gain by associating with foreigners,

which may be especially true in cases involving locals in less developed countries and tourists from more developed countries.[23]

The ways in which tourists and locals interact with each other is referred to as the host-guest encounter. The host-guest framework has been the main approach that anthropologists have employed to examine tourism, especially in terms of the sociocultural impacts that these interactions have on locals (Nash and Smith 1991:14). Although the term "host-guest encounter" suggests a binary opposition, there are actually three sets of actors involved in tourism: tourists, locals, and mediators such as culture brokers (Chambers 2000:30). Mediators or culture brokers are foreigners or locals who are knowledgeable about both the host and guest cultures (e.g., a tourist guide or travel agent). The nature and quality of their cross-cultural interactions depend on the type of tourist involved, the context in which the contact takes place (i.e., spatial, temporal, and communicative factors), and the role of culture brokers (Mathieson and Wall 1982:163).

Tourists (i.e., "guests") and locals (i.e., "hosts") view tourism from their own, distinct perspectives, which do not always correlate with each other and which, in fact, sometimes are in conflict (Lea 1998; Waldren 1997). Hosts view their community from the *inside* as a complex of

23 Krippendorf (1987:18) notes that sometimes prestige is also a factor for tourists, who gain or maintain social status as a result of traveling to distant and exotic places.

kinship relationships, rituals, work, and values; guests, on the other hand, view the same place from the *outside*, often seeing it as a paradise or idealized setting (Waldren 1997:61-62). Waldren suggests that for hosts, a community is a place where people live and work, but for (some) guests, it is a place for relaxation, meditation, or self-discovery. This dichotomy may lead to tourist behaviors or expectations that seem inappropriate or unacceptable to locals. As Chambers observes, "what makes sense to us on the basis of our own preferences for different tourism styles might not always make the same sense" to locals (2000:21-22). However, in some situations, locals may actually be forgiving of certain tourists:

> Foreigners from outside Turkey are *expected* to have different religious and cultural beliefs and practices. Their behavior is not deviant as much as it is different. Therefore, the behavior of foreigners is more easily accepted and leaves less impact on the host community than the behavior of domestic Turkish tourists. [Van Broeck 2001:173]

Just as scholars have categorized tourists, we can also think about a basic typology of tourism itself that separates the phenomenon into two broad categories: mass tourism and alternative tourism. As suggested above, the type of tourism is an important factor in determining the nature and extent of host-guest relationships. In mass tourism, cross-cultural contact between hosts and guests often consists of superficial, pre-programmed encounters, especially in the case of first-class facilities in less developed countries, where enclaves isolate tourists from the locals

(Chambers 2000; Lea 1988). A classic example of the tourist enclave is Cancún, Mexico, which consists of a residential city for locals and a separate, isolated hotel zone that caters to "sun, sea, and sand" tourists. There, tour operators whisk tourists from the airport directly to the hotel zone, where they can find everything they need, without the need to ever set foot in Cancún itself.[24] In such situations, the superficial encounters that occur impede hosts and guests from getting past their preconceived notions and achieving genuine intercultural understanding. Especially when economic and cultural differences between hosts and guests are great, this superficial cross-cultural contact may actually strengthen stereotypes and increase misunderstanding (Chambers 2000).

In contrast, smaller-scale alternative tourism generally offers tourists greater opportunities to interact with locals. In the case of cultural tourism (a specific type of alternative tourism), the primary motivation for the tourist is the opportunity to interact with locals in meaningful ways (Wickens 2005:117) as she learns about their cultural heritage and their contemporary lives (Smith 2003:29). An example of cultural tourism is CultureXplorers, a Philadelphia-based company that offers small groups of travelers the opportunity to meet locals in Latin America and to learn from

24 In fact, when I first studied abroad (on Augustana College's Latin American Fall Quarter in 1991), the program's initial port of call was Cancún. During my brief stay there, I never left the hotel zone and interacted only superficially with locals, all of whom were tourism industry workers.

them about the local culture. These meaningful interactions require a significant effort:

> It is only when a person makes an effort to penetrate into the real life of the areas he visits that he ends up in places especially designed to generate feelings of intimacy and experiences that can be talked about as "participation." No one can "participate" in his own life; he can only participate in the lives of others. [MacCannell 1999:106]

As we have just seen, tourists and locals each have their own motivations for participating in tourism, as well as expectations of the benefits they will receive. These motivations and expectations determine how—and, indeed, whether—tourists and locals interact with each other in the host-guest encounter. The type of tourism (i.e., mass vs. alternative) also affects these interactions. The host-guest encounter results in impacts on all three parties (let us not forget that mediators are also involved in this process), although anthropologists generally have focused solely on host impacts (Stronza 2001).

Tourism's impacts fall into three general categories: sociocultural, economic, and environmental. As we will see, tourism's impacts are diverse and contradictory: "tourist activities have both positive and negative impacts upon a destination but these may differ considerably from the effects which are occurring elsewhere" (Mathieson and Wall 1982:185). Sociocultural impacts are the kind most relevant to my analysis of host families, although economic and environmental impacts

also factor in (albeit to a lesser degree). As such, I begin with a brief overview of economic and environmental impacts before delving into the complexities of sociocultural impacts.

Hosts often perceive *economic* impacts of tourism to be positive, if they obtain employment in the tourism sector or if new infrastructure is built that benefits them. For example, in Mallorca, tourist industry complaints about the airport led to improvements that benefited all users, including locals (Brown 1998:29). However, tourism can also have a negative economic impact, as locals become economically dependent on revenues brought in by tourists who could, at any moment, decide to go elsewhere (or be diverted to another, comparable destination by the tourism industry itself). Mathieson and Wall (1982:36) note that there was an early emphasis on studies of economic impacts, which are more easily quantified than other types of impacts (i.e., sociocultural and environmental). Industry members and national governments who promoted tourism as an avenue to development often undertook economic studies that disregarded sociocultural and environmental variables (Chambers 2000:32).

Environmental impacts, which affect both the natural and the built environment, have been mixed (Mathieson and Wall 1982). A negative environmental impact occurs when the number of tourists exceeds the carrying capacity of a delicate ecosystem, thus leading to environmental

degradation (e.g., destruction of flora in the Galápagos or soil erosion at Machu Picchu). Negative impacts can also occur when a natural area or part of the built environment is converted to another use, such as a tourist resort; however, in some cases, tourism has led to the conservation or preservation of unique buildings, historic sites, and natural areas (Chambers 2000:71; Lea 1988:53-54).

Sociocultural impacts of tourism are the most complex type and the most difficult to measure (Mathieson and Wall 1982; Smith 2003). This is because sociocultural impacts often are intangible and because tourism is merely one of many agents of change, including urbanization, migration, and modernization (Mathieson and Wall 1982; Smith 2003). Indeed, "culture is dynamic and changes over time irrespective of tourism development" (Smith 2003:55). Nevertheless, some indicators can facilitate the complex, time-consuming process of measuring the sociocultural impacts of tourism. These indicators include the tourist-local ratio, the nature of host-guest interaction, locals' perceptions of tourism (and of tourists), changes in family relationships and the role of women, demonstration effects, and increased social problems (Smith 2003:55).

Scholars usually have assessed sociocultural impacts as negative, due to factors such as economic inequalities and cultural differences between hosts and guests (Lea 1988; Tosun 2001). Negative sociocultural

impacts include commodification of culture, alteration of the host culture to serve tourist interests, drop in morals, reduced access of locals to services, rising economic expectations, and adoption of westernized consumerism (Brown 1998; Chambers 2000; Lea 1988). Given this list, the assessment of tourism as negative is not surprising. As well, some groups (e.g., Native Americans of the southwestern United States) may object to the way that they are represented—or *mis*represented—by outsiders in tourism brochures and other advertising (Chambers 2000). Occasionally, locals' perceptions of host-guest inequalities and differences may result in animosity or resentment toward tourists (Chambers 2000; Kohn 1997; Lea 1988). Tourism can also affect the position of women and provide them with greater independence, which may lead to conflicts in the existing social structure (Brown 1998:72).

Many of the sociocultural impacts that anthropologists study are described by acculturation theory (Brunt and Courtney 1999; Mathieson and Wall 1982; Nash 1996; Nuñez 1963 and 1989). A committee established in 1935 by the Social Science Research Council to analyze what was then the emerging concept of acculturation proposed the following definition:

> Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. [Redfield et al. 1936:149]

According to acculturation theory, two cultures that come into direct contact borrow traits or artifacts from each other, and each one becomes somewhat like the other (Nuñez 1989:266). Borrowing occurs both ways, although these relationships almost never are balanced (Nash 1996:92; Nuñez 1989:266; Spindler 1977:8). As an example of this asymmetrical borrowing, Nuñez suggests that the "host population produces ... bilingual individuals, while the tourist population generally refrains from learning the host population's language" (1989:266).[25] Visible changes in behavior, values, and standards are called *phenotypic changes* (Mathieson and Wall 1982:162). Acculturation occurs when these phenotypic changes are passed on to subsequent generations (Mathieson and Wall 1982:162).

Mathieson and Wall (1982:161) expressed concern about acculturation theory, which assumes continuous firsthand contact, and suggested the notion of *cultural drift* as an alternative to describe the culture change that results from tourism. Collins explained that

> cultural drift in this sense states that the role of the guests differs from that of the host and that the temporary contact situation results in change of phenotypic behavior in both the host and the guest. The phenotypic change may be

25 However, education abroad programs whose focus is language immersion may produce similar asymmetrical borrowing in the *opposite* direction, i.e., guests learn the host language. Moreover, these programs often have policies that prohibit the use of the student's native language in the homestay setting. When adhered to, these policies preclude the host family from the opportunity to learn, or practice, the student's native language, thus preventing (or at least minimizing) one acculturative effect.

> permanent in the host society/culture but temporary in the guest society/culture. [1978:278]

Whereas Collins proposes here that the change in hosts' behavior tends to be permanent, other scholars suggest that hosts may adjust to tourists' needs *temporarily* but then revert back to their normal behavior after tourists have left (Mathieson and Wall 1982:162; Smith 2003:53). Cultural drift occurs when hosts and guests exploit the cultural distance between them, as well as each other, in an effort to achieve personal satisfaction from their interaction (Mathieson and Wall 1982:162). As a result, cultural drift "still produce[s] the normative behavior of both groups, but with additional actions which were originally either unacceptable or constrained under previous circumstances" (Mathieson and Wall 1982:162). Similarly, McFee (1968), in his study of Blackfeet culture change in Montana, proposed that acculturation does not always result in cultural loss or replacement; rather, traits borrowed from another culture may be *added* to one's existing set of cultural traits.

In contrast to other research that suggests significant contact is required for acculturation to occur, Brunt and Courtney (1999:509) found that hosts may experience some degree of acculturation even without meaningful conversation with guests. Likewise, Smith suggests that, although host-guest encounters are temporary and short-lived, "local people are subjected to a steady stream of changing faces [, and] constant

levels of visitation over time can have a considerable impact on the social and cultural fabric of the host society" (2003:53). In other words, the constant flow of tourists can have a cumulative effect over time.

In rare cases, stronger ideas from the outside may actually result in assimilation of hosts, as opposed to a more symbiotic acculturative effect (Lea 1988), or in "cultural homogenization" (Chambers 2000). Cultural homogenization in tourism implies that destinations become more like tourist-generating areas, as a result of hosts' perceived need to meet tourists' expectations, as well as the capitalist tendency towards standardization (Chambers 2000:119).

Chambers (2000) notes that not all places fall victim to homogenization and that, in fact, some places respond to tourism by emphasizing *differentiation* between host and guest cultures. This differentiation is seen especially in tourism marketing campaigns that focus on local heritage and culture (S. Gmelch 2004:16). In a globalizing world that seems to be getting more and more homogenized, Brown declares that "tourism has the potential to show people that the world is not as undifferentiated as they thought" (1998:19). Indeed, Sofield (2001) proposes that tourism is simultaneously an agent of *both globalization and localization*. That is, although tourism has a homogenizing effect in terms of creating uniform facilities and services (which usually reflect western standards), it also highlights differences in order to distinguish

one locale from another (S. Gmelch 2004:18-19). In this respect, tourism does not necessarily destroy cultural differences but instead can be a force in maintaining and retaining cultural diversity (Sofield 2001:104).

In some cases, hosts may actually develop greater self-identity and appreciation of their own culture as a result of tourism (Besculides et al. 2002; Chambers 2000; Esman 1984; Kohn 1997; Smith 2003; Waldren 1997). Locals may observe tourist behavior that they consider unacceptable and, as a result, they judge their own culture to be superior. For example, Chambers (2000:26) reports that in Taos, New Mexico, natives' interactions with tourists reinforce their own cultural identity, and they have begun to view their own culture as superior. As well, tourism may also strengthen cultural identity within a heterogeneous group as a way for locals to distinguish themselves from tourists. For example, in Kohn's (1997) study of a small island in the Inner Hebrides, she observed the merger of separate native and non-native resident identities into a single identity that defined residents in opposition to their short-term visitors. Finally, tourism can also instill greater pride in, or deeper appreciation for, locals' own culture as they begin to understand that they have something (i.e., cultural heritage) that is of interest to others (i.e., tourists). As Esman (1984) discovered in Louisiana, this situation led Cajuns to rediscover their cultural heritage and to become “tourists” of their own culture.

In summary, tourism results in a variety of sociocultural impacts—both positive and negative—on receiving communities. Sociocultural impacts include acculturation or cultural drift, cultural homogenization, differentiation or localization, and greater self-identity or appreciation of one's own culture. The types and the extent of these impacts depend on the nature and quality of the host-guest encounter, which itself depends on the actors and the context involved. In addressing these issues, scholars have asked key questions that can be applied to a study of host family outcomes in education abroad, including the following:

- How has cross-cultural contact with guests affected hosts? (Brunt and Courtney 1999; Chambers 2000; de Kadt 1979; Waldren 1997)
- Does cross-cultural contact reinforce stereotypes and increase misunderstanding between hosts and guests? (Chambers 2000)
- Does cross-cultural contact foster a greater appreciation of the host culture on the part of the hosts themselves? (Besculides et al. 2002)
- In what ways do hosts share their culture with guests? (Besculides et al. 2002; Waldren 1997)
- What motivates someone from the host culture to participate in tourism? (Chambers 2000)
- How are host identities strengthened or created as a result of contact with tourists? (Kohn 1997; Waldren 1997)
- In what circumstances do hosts become “tourists” of their own culture? (Besculides et al. 2002; Esman 1984)

The Link between Tourism and Education Abroad

As we have seen in the sections above, whereas the education abroad literature has focused on student impacts, the anthropology of tourism literature has examined host impacts, especially sociocultural ones that result from the host-guest encounter. But how are these two bodies of literature connected? How does the tourism literature provide a relevant framework for studying the impact of education abroad on receiving communities?

First, tourism and education abroad are both intercultural phenomena (Nash 1996). In the case of education abroad, Chambers (2000) suggests that students actually play the role of tourists, in general terms of being guests in another culture. Although international educators might cringe at such a comparison (as did I), I would argue that education abroad participants are at least *academic* tourists. Like many education abroad professionals—and similar to anthropologists in the not-so-distant past—I did not want to be associated with "frivolous" tourists. Instead, I saw myself as a traveler with a serious purpose, that is, learning about another culture. The adjective "academic" came to mind as a way to justify such a comparison, and especially to distinguish education abroad from mass tourism. This no doubt reflects the influence of the late John Perry, Dean of International Education at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Brockport, whose insistence at meetings of the SUNY Directors

of International Education (and other venues) that education abroad is an "academic enterprise" has been forever etched in my mind.[26] In other words, education abroad is not tourism.

The comparison of education abroad and tourism also seems apt in the context of the anthropological definition of *tourist* first proposed by Valene Smith: "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (1977:2). The latter part of this definition certainly applies to education abroad participants, whose academic motivation propels them to travel to distant places in hopes of learning about another culture and, ultimately, about their own culture and themselves (Adler 1975:19).

The reference to *leisure*, which Smith (2001:17) defines as time away from work and essential daily tasks, is relevant as well, especially if one considers it in its historical context. Modern tourism has its roots in the "Grand Tour," which was an opportunity for Northern Europeans, beginning in about the sixteenth century, to expand their education as they explored the world, accompanied by a tutor, and learned about other cultures (Boorstin 1961:82; Chambers 2000:4; S. Gmelch 2004:5-6; Graburn and Jafari 1991:2; Nash 1996:39). Notably, Nash refers to education abroad as "a more egalitarian form" of the Grand Tour

26 I certainly cannot claim to have coined the term "academic tourism," which Johnston (1990:2) used earlier.

(1996:39). Further, Graburn and Jafari noted that "the term *tourist* was coined to describe participants in such pleasurable, educational journeys" as the Grand Tour (1991:2).

In the last century, the development and expansion of capitalism led to the growth of a middle class that has enjoyed increasing opportunities to travel to other places, made even easier by vast improvements in transportation (Chambers 2000:4-5). In both the Grand Tour and modern tourism, leisure is one of three elements (the other two being discretionary income and positive social sanctions) that make participating in tourism a possibility (Smith 2001:17).

Nevertheless, the reference to leisure is problematic when one considers Smith's explanation that a leisured individual "has a choice to do virtually nothing" (2001:17). Mel MacCarthy, an education abroad professional in London, insists that "study abroad is not about leisure; it's primarily about education" (Loveland and Murphy 2006:33). Education abroad participants, of course, do not have the luxury of doing nothing (with the exception of weekends and breaks during, or between, academic terms), but instead have many of their daily activities essentially imposed by host institutions and program directors. Education abroad programs often require attendance in classes, guest lectures, seminars, and other activities to a greater extent than at students' home campuses, especially in the case of the intensive language programs involved in my research.

Tourists, on the other hand, are free to plan their activities and may choose to spend entire days relaxing at the hotel pool or on the beach; in fact, sun and relaxation may be their sole motivations for participating in tourism.

Given this potential for confusion about the meaning of leisure, a more appropriate, less problematic definition of *academic tourist* is needed. Such a definition could be based on Smith's (1977) definition of *tourist*, sans the reference to leisure, and on Adler's (1975) notion of learning about one's own culture and oneself. As well, it should emphasize the inherent international and cross-cultural dimensions of education abroad, and it should take into account that education abroad participants are not always college (or even high school) students. Indeed, participants may include a variety of adults ranging from recent college graduates to retirees.[27] Based on these criteria, I propose the following definition of *academic tourist*: a student or other individual who travels to another country for the purpose of learning about another culture (which may or may not include learning the host language), as well as about their own culture and themselves.

Given this focus on culture, one could argue that education abroad is an academic form of cultural tourism, a comparison that is especially

27 I have worked with educational travel programs whose participants have included adults of all ages (even a 76-year-old retiree), as well as college and high school students. Many of these programs have offered classes for college credit.

appropriate in the case of intensive language programs that offer homestays. Indeed, Smith (2003:31) suggests that language learning or practice is one type of cultural tourism.

Dann's (1996) notion that tourists are "children" and that the tourism industry acts as their "parents" provides an additional link between education abroad and tourism. Anthropologists refer to this as *fictive kinship*, which can be defined as "a relationship, based not on blood or marriage but rather on religious rituals or close friendship ties, that replicates many of the rights and obligations usually associated with family ties" (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:189). Tourists have a tendency to revert to children when they travel, due to the freedom from daily obligations (i.e., leisure) and the rules of home, and because of the unfamiliarity of their new, temporary milieu. Dann also notes that for some tourists, tourism is a form of rebirth, "an opportunity for personal growth" (1996:109). He also observes that the tourism industry treats the tourist like a child, thus suggesting the industry as "parent."

Education abroad also involves fictive kinship, in terms of both the legal concept of *in loco parentis* ("in place of a parent")[28] and the homestays that some programs offer. Fictive kinship plays an important role in homestays, which use terms such as "host parents" and "host

28 For a discussion of the legal implications of *in loco parentis*, see Aalberts and Rhodes (1997).

siblings," which I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter 4. *In loco parentis* refers to the surrogate parent role that education abroad professionals play. "Study abroad programs, almost by definition, bring students with limited understanding of other countries and cultures to unfamiliar places" (Aalberts and Rhodes 1997:362), thus placing professionals in the position of "parents" who enculturate their "children" (i.e., students) into a new cultural milieu.

Summary

In the sections above, I discussed the education abroad literature and anthropological studies of tourism and acculturation. As we saw, research on education abroad has been conducted from an assessment perspective to measure students' learning and personal outcomes such as international mindedness or understanding, intercultural competence, and personal growth or development. I then noted that there is an apparent disconnect between anecdotal claims about the benefits of education abroad and the empirical evidence produced by scholars. Recent trends in education abroad include democratization, in terms of both reaching out to underrepresented groups of students and opening programs in non-traditional destinations, and a surge in scholarly

research. I pointed out that with only a few recent exceptions, research continues to focus on students.

We then toured the literature of the anthropology of tourism and acculturation. Initially, anthropologists were reluctant to study tourism but have since accepted it as a legitimate subject for research. Research has focused on the origins of tourism (i.e., tourist motivations) and the impacts on receiving communities, as well as the interactions between these two groups. I noted that host-guest encounters generally are superficial in mass tourism but more meaningful in alternative forms such as cultural tourism. Tourism impacts fall into three categories: sociocultural, economic, and environmental. Of these, sociocultural impacts are the most complex and difficult to measure, but are also the type that most interest anthropologists, due to the implications for culture change.

Finally, we looked at the connections between tourism and education abroad, noting that both are intercultural phenomena. I suggested that students are academic tourists and that education abroad can be seen as a form of cultural tourism. These analogies are appropriate in part because of tourism's historical roots in the Grand Tour, an educational cross-cultural experience that started in the sixteenth century. Lastly, we saw that both tourism and education abroad involve fictive kin relationships.

Theoretical Perspectives in Tourism Studies

This section takes a more detailed look at the theory embedded in the anthropology of tourism literature that I reviewed above. Several scholars (Aramberri 2005; Chambers 2005; Graburn and Jafari 1991; Nash 1996) have declared that there is no general theory of tourism, while others (Dann 2005; Stronza 2001) suggest that there are, in fact, theories about *some aspects* of the phenomenon (e.g., MacCannell's [1976] theory of the tourist and Urry's [1990] concept of the tourist gaze). Dann (2005) observes that what little theory there is in tourism has not been developed from within but has been contributed by researchers from their respective disciplines (e.g., acculturation theory from anthropology). In this regard, anthropology and sociology have made disproportionate contributions (Dann 2005:4), even though they are relative latecomers to the study of tourism. Further, he notes that much of this theory is grounded in analogies (e.g., tourism as sacred journey) that "may provide some sort of understanding of what tourism *is like*, yet fail to reveal exactly what tourism really *is*" (Dann 2005:9). Dann states, however, that such "metaphorical understanding persists ... because tourists and tourism are

themselves metaphors of the social world" (2005:9; see Picard [2002] for a discussion of the tourist as a metaphor of the social world).

These metaphors are what Nash (1996) calls "perspectives." He proposes that there are three general anthropological perspectives on tourism (Nash 1996:165), which incorporate more specific metaphors (e.g., tourism as play). The metaphor t*ourism as personal transition* is concerned with tourists and focuses on their motivations and on what the experience means to them. *Tourism as superstructure* treats tourism as a system and tries to understand its causes. Finally, *tourism as acculturation or development* is the predominant anthropological paradigm for examining the sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts (Nash 1996:25) that lead to culture change in hosts. Anthropologists who have conducted research from the perspective of acculturation or development have done so with the agenda of helping hosts who have been impacted by tourism (Nash 1996:81).

Anthropologists began to study tourism in the 1960s and 1970s because it offered an additional context in which to examine culture change (Nash 1996:8; Nash and Smith 1991:13). At the time, acculturation was already a well-developed theory for analyzing culture change. In 1935, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) appointed Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits to study the emerging concept of acculturation (Redfield et al. 1936:149). They were the first scholars to

systematically outline the concepts involved in studying the phenomenon (Clemmer 1972:216). Nearly two decades later, in 1953, the SSRC devoted one of its summer seminars to the study of acculturation (1954:973). The result of that seminar was an "exploratory formulation" of acculturation theory (see SSRC 1954).

Acculturation is a specific type of culture change that involves direct contact between two or more cultures that borrow cultural traits or artifacts from each other (Nuñez 1989:266; Redfield et al. 1936:149; Spindler 1977:7-8; SSRC 1954:974). The SSRC summer seminar on acculturation defined the concept as "culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems" (1954:974). This cross-cultural aspect distinguishes acculturation from other types of culture change that result from interactions between subgroups of a single society (Spindler 1977:8; SSRC 1954:974). Acculturation is a condition of *assimilation*, which "implies an essentially unilateral approximation of one culture in the direction of the other" (SSRC 1954:988). *Diffusion* describes cultural transmission that may or may not occur through direct contact (Redfield et al. 1936:149-150; Spindler 1977:7).[29] Acculturation, which occurs as each group borrows traits from the other, is always

29 While drawing this distinction, Redfield et al. also pointed out that the concepts are *connected*: "diffusion [occurs] in all instances of acculturation ... but [it] constitutes only one aspect of the process of acculturation" (1936:149-150).

reciprocal; however, since it usually occurs asymmetrically, sometimes it may appear to be one-way (Nash 1996:92; Spindler 1977:8).

Since "cultures do not meet, but people who are their carriers do" (SSRC 1954:980), acculturation results from the interaction between *individuals* of different cultures. That is, culture change generally begins with individuals and then spreads through the group (Spindler 1977:7). However, it is the cultural systems—and not the individuals involved (i.e., the culture bearers)—that are acculturated (SSRC 1954:975). Moreover, culture bearers "never know their entire cultures and never convey all they know to one another" (SSRC 1954:980); therefore, intercultural transfer is only *partial*. These individuals mediate the cultural process (SSRC 1954:975). This mediation is conditioned by the reasons for the contact and by the roles the individuals assume (SSRC 1954:980-981). In tourism parlance, these culture bearers are the hosts and guests.

Jafari (2001) provides an alternative set of categories, which he calls "platforms," that suggest an evolution of tourism research since World War II. The advocacy, cautionary, adaptancy, and knowledge-based platforms developed chronologically over several decades but co-exist today (Jafari 2001:29).

Proponents of the *advocacy platform* have viewed tourism as a positive phenomenon, especially in economic terms, as it provides

employment for locals, preserves the natural and built environments, revives cultural traditions, and promotes global peace (Jafari 2001:29). Lea observes that during this period "studies tended to assume that the extension of [tourism] in the Third World was a good thing" (1988:1). The Advocacy Platform includes primarily economists and industry members who have promoted tourism as a route to economic development (Jafari 2001:29), as well as national governments that have bought into the idea that tourism is a miracle cure. As such, this platform has tended to ignore negative impacts (especially sociocultural and environmental ones) or to suggest that they would be outweighed by the economic benefits received (e.g., creation of jobs, construction of infrastructure, etc.).

The *cautionary platform* developed in the 1960s and 1970s as anthropologists, sociologists, and other social scientists concerned with protecting cultures (especially indigenous ones in less developed countries) and the natural environment began to document the negative impacts of tourism on host communities (Jafari 2001:29). For example, researchers pointed out that although tourism may provide employment for locals, many of those jobs are seasonal and unskilled (higher-paying jobs often go to foreigners). As well, scholars expressed concern about the potential for governments to divert scarce resources from crucial social programs needed by locals to development projects that benefited only (foreign) tourists. Moreover, as Lea (1988:5) noted, sometimes the

economic benefits may actually be outweighed by less obvious disbenefits in other areas (e.g., negative sociocultural and environmental impacts).

Scholars in the cautionary platform also have warned of cultural loss through commodification and acculturation. As Jafari notes, "for any claim of the Advocacy Platform, there has been a counterclaim by the Cautionary Platform, a situation potentially not conducive to fruitful dialogues or discourses" (2001:30). Given that cultures are always undergoing change, one might wonder why change usually is perceived as bad when it is related to tourism (Brown 1998:73). Indeed, scholars often took a largely one-sided, negative view of tourism's impacts on locals that later proved to be unwarranted (e.g., Greenwood 1977), but "seen from a host country's point of view, tourism seemed to have both good and bad sides" (Nash and Smith 1991:15). Tourism served as an easy scapegoat in early studies, but more recently, scholars have begun to understand that tourism is just one of many agents of culture change and that global means of communication, transnational migration, urbanization, industrialization, and other factors need to be considered as well (Brown 1998:112; S. Gmelch 2004:15; Van Broeck 2001:172).

The *adaptancy platform* developed in the 1980s in response to the polarization between the advocacy and cautionary platforms (Jafari 2001:31). Proponents of the adaptancy platform suggested that alternative, or adapted, forms of tourism would have fewer negative

consequences on host communities (Jafari 2001:31; see also McLaren 2003). Such forms are "responsive to the host communities and their sociocultural, built, and natural environments and ... provide tourists with new choices and rewarding experiences" (Jafari 2001:31). To that end, alternative tourism should be community-centered, employ local resources, benefit both hosts and guests, and not be destructive (Jafari 2001:31). Depending on the specific focus, other terms have also been used, including community-based tourism, cultural/ethnic tourism, ecotourism, responsible tourism, and sustainable tourism (Jafari 2001:31). Jafari (2001:31) notes that even "no tourism" has been mentioned as an alternative. He further notes that alternative tourism is merely a *partial* solution, since it cannot handle the ever-growing volume of tourists (Jafari 2001:31).

Finally, the *knowledge-based platform* emerged in the 1990s as scholars moved toward a more systematic, or scientific, analysis of tourism (Jafari 2001:31) that has tried to avoid the value judgments that predominated earlier studies (Nash 1996:22). Unlike the other platforms, which focus on impacts or forms, the knowledge-based platform represents a shift to a *holistic* study of tourism (Jafari 2001:32). This important development recognizes that elements in any sociocultural system are related; therefore, change in one area is likely to lead to change in other areas (Nash 1996:23). Along these lines, Brown argues that

environmental, economic, and sociocultural impacts cannot be separated and should be analyzed as a totality of "tourism effects," but she cautions that "'holism' should not imply studying only the whole to the exclusion of any consideration of the parts;" *both* should be examined (1998:112).

In summary, the few theoretical perspectives in tourism have been contributed by the individual disciplines of the scholars who have examined the phenomenon and not from within tourism itself (Dann 2005). Scholars have approached tourism from various perspectives (e.g., acculturation), which Jafari (2001) observes have evolved over time. While earlier studies tended to be simplistic and viewed tourism as either good or bad (i.e., the advocacy and cautionary platforms, respectively), more recent research has been more holistic and sophisticated (i.e., the knowledge-based platform). Jafari (2001:31) suggests that by considering tourism as a *system*, scholars will understand better its underlying structures and functions, which will lead to the further development of theory. Likewise, a more complete understanding of education abroad, including the perspective of both students and hosts, could be achieved by studying it as a system as well.

Research Goals and Methods

Research Goals

As I noted earlier, several scholars have suggested that there is a relevant connection between education abroad and the anthropology of tourism (Chambers 2000; Graburn and Jafari 1991; Nash 1976 and 1996; Sumka 1999 and 2000). This connection stems from the commonality of cross-cultural contact between guests and their hosts. A noted scholar of tourism, describing the anthropological approach to tourism, wrote that

> culture is expressed by the ways in which members of a group determine and symbolize the meaningfulness of their lives. While anthropologists have in the past used this concept largely to describe the unique meaning systems of particular groups of people, there has been a growing interest in thinking of the cultural as a process that originates in occasions in which different groups are led to confront and then attempt to reconcile each others' standards of meaning and significance. Tourism, with its multiple realms of human interaction, provides ample opportunity for the play of cultural processes and for the invention of new forms of cultural expression. [Chambers 1997:3]

Chambers was writing about tourism, but he just as easily could have been describing education abroad.

As I pointed out in the literature review, much attention has been given to how cross-cultural contact affects students, but little has been done to learn about the encounter from the hosts' perspective. Since hosting students appears to involve some of the same host-guest dynamics

found in tourism, it seems logical to apply this model to education abroad as well. Given this assumption, we can look to the tourism literature for guidance on the kinds of inquiries that would further illuminate our understanding of host-guest encounters and host impacts in education abroad.

Noting that the anthropology of tourism has focused on the motivations of tourists and the impacts on hosts, Stronza called for further research to learn "the full story of what happens to both hosts and guests throughout all stages of their journeys and cross-cultural encounters" (2001:277). In the education abroad literature, the missing parts of the full story are the motivations of hosts, the host-guest encounter from the perspective of hosts, and the impacts (especially sociocultural and economic) on hosts as a result of that contact. Further, Stronza called for future researchers "to learn more about the dynamics of host-guest interactions by observing and talking with people on both sides of the encounter" (2001:272). I have heeded that call by including the perspectives of a variety of hosts and guests.

Nash (1996:171) also called for better-balanced coverage of touristic processes through the holistic approach of ethnography, especially in places other than the traditional anthropological areas of the less developed world. Nash's suggestion is to study tourism in places other than the rural villages and indigenous communities where anthropologists

traditionally have conducted such inquiries. My research honors the spirit of that suggestion by examining a particular context of cross-cultural encounter (i.e., education abroad) that has received minimal attention in the tourism literature. In doing so, I have suggested that education abroad is not merely *like* tourism but that it *actually is* an academic form of cultural tourism.

Smith notes that while alternative forms of tourism such as cultural tourism have served niche markets, "the growth of cultural tourism has meant that the impacts have increased in parallel" (2003:43). She also writes that

> the growth of international tourism and the diversification of the tourism product have led to an increase in demand for cultural activities, which are becoming an integral part of the visitor experience. The phenomenon of *mass cultural tourism is increasingly becoming a cause for concern*, whether it is the proliferation of long weekend breaks in the historic cities of Europe, or hill tribe trekking in Southeast Asia. [Smith 2003:45; emphasis added]

Smith's caution is especially poignant in the context of education abroad, given the Lincoln Commission's challenge in the next decade to quintuple the number of students that go abroad.

With these issues in mind, I went into the field with the following questions, which emanated from the tourism literature:

- Which locals become host families? What are their motivations for hosting?

- What happens in the host-guest encounter? How do host families share their culture with students?

- How do host families perceive that cross-cultural contact with students has affected them? Does hosting students seem to foster a greater appreciation of their own culture? Does it increase understanding between the two cultures?

These questions have guided me throughout the research process, both while I was in the field and in my analysis of the data I collected.

I went into the field with a basic, yet incomplete, understanding of host families. Based on my experience as an education abroad professional in Cuenca, I had a general idea that only a specific segment of the population (i.e., the middle class) was involved in hosting, but I had only suspicions about their motivations. As well, over the years students had told me stories about their interactions with host families, and of course I could recall my own experience as a student, but I did not know what the families themselves thought about hosting nor how they thought it affected them. In summary, the research questions listed above, as well as those from the tourism literature (see the "Anthropology of Tourism and Acculturation" section of the literature review earlier in this chapter), guided me toward reaching a more nuanced understanding of the hosting experience, specifically, from the perspective of host families.

Methods

The following section describes the ethnographic methods used to support this thesis. I began my research by reviewing background materials, including the bodies of literature discussed above, after which I conducted fieldwork in Cuenca, Ecuador, from June to August and November to December 2005.

I chose Cuenca as the site for my ethnographic research because of my professional and personal connections with the city and its people. As an education abroad professional, I have worked with Cuenca-based programs for much of the last decade. In that time, the number of programs co-sponsored by US institutions has grown rapidly from just two or three to more than a dozen, and enrollment has increased several times over.[30] I have been directly involved in facilitating some of that growth, both by recruiting students and by helping to develop new programs. Moreover, as a former resident staff member, I accompanied several groups of students to Cuenca, helped them to adjust to their new cultural milieu, and worked to resolve any problems that arose. In short, I was one of the culture brokers that mediate the interaction between hosts and guests.

30 In addition, there has been an explosion of Spanish language schools. In 1992, there were perhaps just two such schools, but today that number has grown to 20 or more. I discuss this in further detail in Chapter 3.

Additionally, as an undergraduate in the early 1990s, I studied abroad in Cuenca. During the year I was a student in Cuenca, I took intensive Spanish language classes, completed an internship at the regional development agency, and lived with a host family. More recently, I married a *Cuencana* and now have affinal, as well as fictive, kinship ties to Cuenca.

These professional and personal connections provided me with important contacts that facilitated my fieldwork. Whenever I had questions or needed assistance, I had a preexisting social network on which I could rely. Moreover, as an adopted member of the culture, I already knew how many things worked before I arrived in the field, which greatly eased the process of gaining entrée and reduced the time required in the field. In short, I went into the field with a partial understanding of the host-guest encounter in education abroad, specifically, from the viewpoints of guest and mediator; what I needed to learn was the viewpoint of the host families themselves.

While I will demonstrate in Chapter 4 that host families *perceive* that they have experienced some sociocultural and economic impacts, a longer period of fieldwork would have been required to adequately measure the *actual* effects of hosting. For example, a longer time in the field may have provided me with the opportunity to track new host families from the time that they applied, through hosting their first

student, to follow-up after the student's departure. Moreover, I could have compared my empirical observations with the families' perceptions of the sociocultural impacts on them. This would have allowed me to address not only the question of what hosts perceive they get from hosting but also what they actually receive. As well, additional time in the field would have permitted me to conduct focus groups with host families and to facilitate the implementation of some of the improvements that host families and key school personnel suggested.

Participant-Observation

I spent a total of three months living with a family (comprised of my parents- and brother-in-law, and a live-in maid), taking part in the daily life of Cuenca and participating in weekly reunions with the extended family. This served as a refresher to living with a host family, as several years had elapsed since my own firsthand experience in a homestay.[31] This experience also provided me with an informal, ongoing setting to learn about important current issues.[32]

---

31 I lived with my host family for over a year (June 1992 to July 1993) and later stayed with them on several subsequent visits through the mid- to late-1990s. I was the first student they hosted, and we have kept in touch (in fact, I visited them a few times during my fieldwork).

32 In addition, I had hoped to observe students and host families interacting with each other, but this did not work out. I found that, during the week, they did not spend much time together (an observation confirmed by several host families). Indeed, by visiting one of the schools at various times of the day (including the siesta, late afternoon and evening—all times when classes were not being held), I observed that many of the students spent much of their time there instead of at home. Students

Key Consultants

Homestay coordinators at three language schools served as key consultants for my research. Their familiarity with host families, as well as with the culture in general, was invaluable in identifying host parents who would be willing to participate in semi-structured interviews and in helping me to understand some of the intricacies of Cuencan culture. Two of these key consultants served the crucial role of introducing me to the host families and arranging interviews with them. All three consultants, as well as an administrator who previously worked with families, provided valuable insights about the processes of evaluating applicants interested in hosting students and of matching students and host families. All of my key consultants were women, and their experience with host families ranged from a few years or less to two decades.

Interviews

Interviews represent the bulk of my data collection. In heeding Stronza's (2001) call to include people on both sides of the encounter, I interviewed members of several groups: 36 current host families, three

were at school to attend extracurricular activities (e.g., guest lectures and salsa classes) and to use the computer lab (for completing papers and accessing the Internet). In addition, some of the families were not hosting students at the time I interviewed them.

families that no longer host, five students, several key personnel (both Ecuadorians and foreigners) of language schools and education abroad programs, and a few other locals. The current families ranged from those who had started hosting just a few months prior to my fieldwork to those who had hosted for a decade or more. There is the potential for some bias, as the host families were self-selected or selected for me by homestay coordinators. If I could do this again, I would try to avoid such an "opportunity sample" by first using demographic data to group host families into appropriate categories and then using a representative sample.

For most of the interviews (especially those with current and former host families), I used a general protocol, so that I could collect responses for specific topics from all of the consultants. Questions for host families included the following:

- How long have you been hosting students?
- How many students have you hosted?
- How did you get into hosting?
- What were your expectations or hopes of hosting before you started?
- Describe a normal weekday.
- What are some of the good experiences you have had with students?

- What problems or bad experiences have you had with students?

I chose a semi-structured format for interviews, which offered the flexibility to spend more time on certain topics, or to explore new topics that consultants suggested, while still providing guidance on overall content. The protocol did not specify a rigid time limit for each interview, although I tried plan about an hour for each session. However, in some cases, the consultants got so wrapped up in talking (and I in listening) about their experiences that the interviews lasted for several hours (one as long as five hours). With the other local consultants, I used a more open-ended format, which allowed them to tell me what they thought were the most important points within the general topics of tourism and culture change in Cuenca.

At the beginning of some of the interviews with host families, they seemed to be concerned, or perhaps confused, about my role. Prior to each interview, the homestay coordinators from the schools called the *señora* to inform her that I was conducting research about host families and to inquire if she would be willing to participate in my project. While this certainly facilitated my access to the host families, it may have also given them the impression that I was an official envoy from the school. Fortunately, I was able to allay such concerns and to build rapport fairly

quickly by explaining at the beginning of each interview that the research was for my master's thesis and that each interviewee's confidentiality was protected. A written informed consent form on University of Denver letterhead reinforced this message and also facilitated my ethical responsibility to explain the purpose of my research and to ensure that participants fully understood the reason for their involvement and how I would use the information they provided (see Fluehr-Lobban 2003 for a discussion of informed consent).

Qualitative Data Analysis

To analyze the qualitative data from my interviews, I used TAMS Analyzer, an open-source program for the Mac OS X and Linux operating systems.[33] Since I did not have audio equipment in the field to record interviews, I instead took copious notes that I later transcribed. I then used TAMS Analyzer to code the text, identifying themes such as impacts on host families, motivations for hosting, appreciation of one's own culture, cultural identity, etc. By using qualitative analysis software, I was then able to search through the data for themes more easily than I would have by relying solely on my handwritten field notes.

33 TAMS Analyzer was written by Dr. Matthew Weinstein at Kent State University and can be downloaded from http://tamsys.sourceforge.net/.

The analysis process was one of trial and error, as I was simultaneously learning how to analyze qualitative data (not to mention learning a new piece of software) and trying to code my actual research data. This meant that on several occasions, I had to re-code interview transcriptions as I learned how to better carry out the task.

Chapter 3: Background Material

Ethnographic Sketch of Cuenca, Ecuador

In *The Panama Hat Trail*, Tom Miller tells a humorous (but presumably fictitious) story that illustrates how conservative Cuenca society is, especially with regard to Catholicism:

> I heard about a Cuencano who sent his daughter to college in the United States. A few months later a business associate was to visit the States, and the father asked his friend to check up on his daughter. Upon his return the businessman lunched with the father. "I've got terrible news for you," the businessman said in a somber tone. "Your daughter has become a pro—." The rumble of a passing truck drowned his words.
>
> "Oh, that's awful," said his unhappy companion. "I raised her so properly, took her to mass every Sunday, sent her to the right schools—why I even had the bishop himself officiate at her communion. Where did I go wrong?"
>
> "Yes, such a pity," consoled the businessman. "I was shocked to learn that she had become a prostitute."
>
> "Oh!" said the father, much relieved. "I thought you said she'd become a Protestant!" [2001:19-20]

As Miller notes, “even the pope would be considered a backslider here, but he would appreciate Cuenca's municipal motto: *Primero Dios, Después Vos*. First God, Then You” (2001:19). As with most Spanish colonial cities in the New World, Cuenca was settled on a grid pattern with the church on the main plaza, right in the center of town, clearly demonstrating the religious authority's power and importance.

Cuenca has a rich cultural heritage that spans several centuries. Well before the Spanish arrived in the New World, the Cañari settled the town of Guapondélig in a basin between the parallel ranges of the Andes Mountains in what is now southern Ecuador. When the Incas conquered the area in the late 1400s, they established Tomebamba (see Figure 2), a short-lived city that was to have rivaled their imperial capital, Cusco. Ogburn (2004:232) contends that Tomebamba was intended to be the second capital of the Inca Empire. Indeed, the Inca Huayna Cápac built a palace at Tomebamba, and it was there that he died (Robinson 1994:62) in the 1520s.

Following Huayna Cápac's death, the vast empire was divided between his two sons, half-brothers Atahualpa and Huáscar, who ruled from Quito and Cusco, respectively. Civil war ensued. During the conflict, the Cañari sided with Huáscar and eventually captured Atahualpa, imprisoning him at Tomebamba (Robinson 1994:62); however, Atahualpa escaped and went on to win the war. Following his victory in 1532, he

Figure 2: Map of Cuenca showing the historic city center and the site of the Inca city of Tomebamba.

exacted revenge for his capture by executing the Cañari population of Tomebamba and destroying the city (Robinson 1994:62). Two decades later, on 12 April 1557, Gil Ramírez Dávalos, a Spaniard, founded the modern city of Santa Ana de los Cuatro Ríos de Cuenca (Saint Anne of the Four Rivers of Cuenca) near the ruins of Tomebamba.[34]

Today, Cuenca is Ecuador's third largest city. With 277,374 inhabitants, Cuenca is considerably smaller than the country's two largest cities, Guayaquil and Quito, which have populations of nearly two million and one and a half million, respectively (INEC 2001).[35] Cuenca is the capital of the province of Azuay and the primary economic and cultural center of the *Austro* region. Although some consider it "provincial" in

34 The site of the Inca city is adjacent to the southeast corner of Cuenca's historic city center and is completely surrounded by urban development.

35 The population figure for Cuenca is from the latest census (2001) and corresponds to the urban portion of the *cantón* of Cuenca, which includes the city itself and several surrounding *parroquias* (parishes). (Including rural areas, the total population of the *cantón* in 2001 was 417,623.) This method also was used for estimating the populations of Guayaquil and Quito.

comparison to the country's two larger, cosmopolitan cities, Cuenca is a center for arts and scholarship, a reputation that has earned it the nickname "Athens of the Andes" (some refer to it more modestly as "Athens of Ecuador").

As well, Cuenca is considered to be Ecuador's most beautiful city because of its striking colonial architecture and cobblestone streets. The layout of Cuenca's city center is representative of Spanish colonial town planning, which consisted of a grid extended outward from a central plaza. The old cathedral, which dates from the 1580s, graces the eastern side of the plaza, and the new cathedral, built in the 1880s, towers over the western side. Colonial structures on the south side were removed in the 1960s and replaced with modern buildings (e.g., city hall).

Fortunately, in the 1970s, civic leaders had the foresight to recognize the importance of preserving the historic character of the city center and conducted the first inventory of Cuenca's historic buildings (Cuenca 1999). The year 1982 saw two important statutory measures—the *Urban Development Plan for the Metropolitan Area of Cuenca* and the *Act on the Designation of the Historic Center of the Town of Cuenca*—that have helped to safeguard the city center and to restore several historic buildings (ICOMOS 1999:33-34). These preservation efforts were rewarded in 1999 when UNESCO inscribed Cuenca's historic city center on

the World Heritage List.[36] An advisory evaluation noted that "Cuenca has been able to retain its image as a colonial town and ... its historic center ... [has] a traditional and active social life" (ICOMOS 1999:34).

In addition to these distinctions, Cuenca also has played a key role in the country's massive transnational migration that started in the 1970s and intensified in the 1980s. Historically, this phenomenon involved primarily people from rural areas of Azuay and Cañar provinces emigrating to New York City (in particular, the borough of Queens). More recently, people from urban areas such as Cuenca have begun to emigrate as well. Additionally, Ecuadorians from other parts of the country recently have begun to emigrate, especially to Spain (see Jokisch and Pribilsky [2002] for a comparison of the "old" and "new" emigration). August 2000 estimates from the Embassy of Ecuador in Washington suggest that there may be as many as one million Ecuadorians in the United States alone (Walmsley 2001:160); however, other sources place that figure much lower. For example, the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research at SUNY Albany estimated that for the same year, just 396,400 Ecuadorians were residing in the United States (Logan 2001:6). These figures suggest that a significant portion of Ecuador's total

36 Cuenca's inscription on the World Heritage List in 1999 was based on three criteria: (1) implanting Renaissance urban planning, (2) fusing different societies and cultures, and (3) being an outstanding example of a planned inland Spanish colonial city (UNESCO 1999).

population—perhaps three to eight percent—may be living in the United States.[37]

Of this total, Jokisch (2001:61) notes that as many 150,000 may be from Cuenca and its vicinity, which he suggests might make the provinces of Azuay and Cañar the largest emigrant-generating region in all of South America. At times, it seems that everyone in Cuenca knows someone (or someone who knows someone) who has emigrated. During the economic crisis of the late 1990s, I saw graffiti that hinted at the extent of transnational emigration and the degree of desperation: "*el último que se vaya, que apague la luz*" ("the last one to leave, shut off the light").[38]

These transnational migrants keep in contact with family back in Ecuador and occasionally return to visit; in the process, they transmit traits from other cultures. Moreover, monetary remittances from emigrants, which accounted for 10 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product in 1999 (IADB 2001:12), provide their families back in Ecuador with increased social and economic status. This foreign income allows families to build new, larger houses, often using US architectural designs (Jokisch and Pribilsky 2002; Walmsley 2001). As well, remittances may facilitate the disruption of a village's social structure, as Walmsley (2001)

37 Ecuador's 2001 census reported a total population of 12,156,608 (INEC 2001). Current estimates place the population at more than 13 million.

38 Walmsley (2001) has also reported observing this graffiti on the walls of Cuenca's city center.

has documented. One of the changes she observed was that residents abandoned the community-based *minga*,[39] and its associated reciprocity and social interaction, since remittances made it possible for them to hire laborers to do the work (Walmsley 2001:165).

Figure 3: The famous "I Love New York" tourism logo (image adapted from The Official New York State Tourism Website, http://www.iloveny.com/).

In my many visits to Ecuador, I often have heard Ecuadorians refer to the United States, and to New York City in particular, as "*la iony*." This term is an example of how pervasive transnational migration is, and how strong an influence US culture can be, in southern Ecuador. It is common to hear Cuencans talk about having just been to *la iony*. I vaguely recall that someone once suggested to me that this nickname was a reference to the presence of US troops in Latin America at various times throughout history. However, during my library research in Cuenca, I found a master's thesis (Ordóñez Rivera 2003:29) that explained that the nickname was actually derived from the famous "I Love New York" tourism logo (see Figure 3). Other scholars (Pribilsky 2004:317; Kyle 2000:2) cite this derivation as well.[40]

39 The *minga* is an indigenous Andean tradition in which community members work collectively on a project (e.g., construction of a potable water system). The idea is similar to a barn-raising or quilting bee during the frontier days of the United States.

40 Kyle (2000:2) uses the spelling *yany* (from the Spanish "*yo amo Nueva York*"), which he heard in reference specifically to New York City. Pribilsky suggests an alternate meaning of *iony*: "travelling north means fulfilling the dream of becoming an *iony*, a name ... used to describe returned migrants who have adopted American styles of speech, clothing, and attitude" (2004:317-318). I have always heard *la iony* in

In the early 1990s, when Ecuadorians were still migrating primarily to New York City and its environs, New York and the United States were essentially synonymous. Whenever an Ecuadorian asked me where I was from, and I replied "*los Estados Unidos*," they generally assumed that I meant New York. If I provided a more specific answer ("*soy de Iowa*"), I usually received a puzzled look, which I later began to conclude meant that the person figured that Iowa was simply an unfamiliar neighborhood or suburb of New York. Once, while I was waiting outside the US Consulate in Guayaquil, a *guayaquileño* struck up a conversation with me. When I told him that I was from Iowa, and explained that it was a state west of Chicago, he still seemed to think that I was from New York. He proceeded to tell me that he had lived in Brooklyn and wanted to know if I had been to the public school he attended or if I knew a certain Polish family he had met there. More recently, as Ecuadorians have started to migrate in larger numbers to other parts of the United States (e.g., Charlotte, North Carolina, and Des Moines, Iowa), I have noticed a distinction between *la iony* (i.e., New York) and *los Estados Unidos*.

Television (especially cable) and the Internet provide Ecuadorians with additional transnational influences such as images of consumerism. As Rahier notes, "since their creation, [Ecuadorian] television stations

reference to the place (i.e., usually to just New York City but sometimes also to the United States generally), and r*esidente* for migrants that have adopted US styles.

have provided an opening to the rest of the world" (1998:426). He adds that broadcast stations often retransmit programming from the US (and also from Europe), and that the introduction of cable television in the early 1990s forced those stations into increasing competition with foreign channels (Rahier 1998:426). The Internet, which is now ubiquitous in Cuenca, also provides an opening—an interactive one at that—to the world. Internet cafés line the streets of the city center, and they can be found in outlying residential neighborhoods as well.

In addition, two US-style shopping malls, Milenium Plaza and Mall del Río, have been built in Cuenca since 2000 (previously, there were none). These malls are filled with some of the same stores (e.g., Hallmark and health store GNC) that one would find in any mall in the United States, and they also have food courts with KFC and Burger King.

Related to emigration and remittances, it is crucial to mention economic crisis and dollarization. In the late 1990s, it was revealed that directors of several banks had loaned themselves money, without collateral, and then defaulted on those loans. Losing trust in banks, account holders began to demand that banks return their deposits, and widespread panic ensued as banks often were unable to honor withdrawal requests due to cash flow problems. The government liquidated several failing banks. Ecuador's currency, the *sucre*, "depreciated by about 200% in 1999, real output collapsed by more than 8%, and consumer price

inflation surpassed 90%" (Nazmi 2001:734). Whitten notes that "for those with money in a bank ... the radical devaluation of the sucre reduced savings by 75%" (2004:453).

Acknowledging the government's inability to manage monetary policy, then-president Jamil Mahuad announced the implementation of dollarization (i.e., adoption of the US dollar as the country's official currency) and several economic austerity measures, which were conditions of obtaining loans from international sources such as the International Monetary Fund. As a result, he lost popular support and in January 2000 was escorted peacefully from the presidential palace by army officers.[41] Nevertheless, Mahuad's successor, Gustavo Noboa (who had been vice-president) implemented many of the austerity measures, including dollarization.

Six years after dollarization, unemployment stands at 10 percent, and more than 50 percent of Ecuadorians are underemployed (Prensa Latina 2006). Not surprisingly, most families' monthly income is significantly less than the amount the government estimates a typical family needs to cover its basic living expenses (Prensa Latina 2006).[42]

41 One of the army officers was Lucio Gutiérrez, who later won the 2002 presidential election. In an ironic turn of events, Lucio himself was ousted in April 2005, becoming the third president to be removed from office in less than a decade. The first ouster occurred in 1997 when Ecuador's Congress invoked an obscure Constitutional provision to remove Abdalá Bucaram, who referred to himself as "*El Loco*" ("the Crazy Man"), on the grounds that he was mentally incompetent. Apparently, Ecuadorians love irony.

42 This refers to the *canasta analítica familiar básica*, which is adjusted monthly. For

Exacerbating the problem is the fact that many basic necessities have increased in cost as a result of dollarization. As many Ecuadorians discover that jobs are no longer available, or are not as lucrative as they once were, they seek new opportunities. Those who are able to emigrate often do so (for those emigrating illegally, this involves paying a *coyote* $10,000 or more to arrange a dangerous, clandestine journey). Others who are unable, or unwilling, to emigrate must seek innovative solutions for economic survival. One way appears to be serving as a host family for the increasing number of international students who visit Cuenca each year.

Education Abroad in Cuenca

During the last decade, Cuenca has seen a rapid expansion of education abroad programs. In 1991, when I first visited Cuenca, there were only a few organized education abroad programs in the city. Today, there are at least a dozen credit-bearing programs and a score of language schools. Many of the students who attend these programs or schools—especially those whose focus is language learning—live with local host families.

December 2005, the *canasta* was $437.41, up from $394.45 the previous year (INEC 2006).

The first group of US university students to study in Cuenca was from Lewis and Clark College (Portland, Oregon), which started its program in the 1980s. Initially, the Centro Cultural Ecuatoriano-Norteamericano Abraham Lincoln hosted the program and arranged homestays for Lewis and Clark students. The director of the Abraham Lincoln Center is Richard Boroto, a former Peace Corps volunteer who has lived in Cuenca for more than three decades and serves as an honorary consul from the United States. The program has since moved to the Fundación Amauta, whose academic director is anthropologist Lynn Hirschkind, who conducted her dissertation research in Ecuador in the late 1970s and has lived in Cuenca for the last two decades. Lewis and Clark offers separate summer and spring programs; both sessions focus on Spanish language and anthropology.

In 1989, Augustana College (Rock Island, Illinois) moved its Summer Spanish Program from Arequipa, Peru, to Cuenca following the escalation of terrorist activities in that country by *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path).[43] The Universidad del Azuay hosted Augustana students for the program's first three years in Cuenca. Then, in 1992, Steven Wille, the program's director, and several colleagues from Ecuador and the

43 Sendero Luminoso's founder, Abimael Guzmán, was captured in 1993, and the organization's power quickly diminished. In 1996, Augustana began taking Summer Spanish Program participants to Peru once again, but only for an educational study tour following the completion of their studies in Cuenca.

United States founded the Centro de Estudios Interamericanos (CEDEI)[44], which has hosted the program ever since. The Augustana Summer Spanish Program focuses on intensive language instruction, and advanced students can take classes in Latin American culture and literature. In addition, Augustana has a triennial Fall Quarter that makes a stop in Cuenca during its journey through Latin America.[45]

There are also numerous other credit-bearing programs for university students that are based in Cuenca. Lenoir-Rhyne College (North Carolina) and Kutztown University (Pennsylvania) have programs at the Universidad del Azuay, and Broward Community College (Florida) and Florida Atlantic University have agreements with the Universidad Panamericana de Cuenca. CEDEI is the most active institution in Cuenca in terms of education abroad. In addition to the Augustana programs mentioned above, CEDEI also co-sponsors programs with the Berkshire School (Massachusetts), Ohio University, St. Ambrose University (Iowa), Salisbury University (Maryland), Syracuse University (New York), the University of Lethbridge (Alberta, Canada), and the University of

44 I was a student in the 1992 Summer Spanish Program and then took a year off from Augustana to study at CEDEI during its inaugural year. During the latter portion of my year in Cuenca, I completed an internship at the Centro de Reconversión Económica del Azuay, Cañar y Morona Santiago (CREA), the regional development agency for three provinces in southern Ecuador.

45 I was a also student in Augustana's 1991 Fall Quarter in Latin America, which included stops in Cuenca and other parts of Ecuador, as well as Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Chile.

Wisconsin-Whitewater. All of these programs include Spanish language instruction, and some also offer instruction in other areas such as anthropology, business, and environmental studies.

In addition, in the mid-1990s, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) selected Cuenca as the site for language and cultural training for its Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program. The program has since moved to Nexus, Lenguas y Cultura, a language school that offers Spanish, English, and German.

Around the time that I started my fieldwork, a Quito newspaper reported that there are now perhaps 20 language schools in Cuenca that offer short-term Spanish instruction (El Comercio 2005), including locally-based CEDEI and Nexus, as well as Madrid-based Estudio Sampere and Quito-based Simón Bolívar. Of these language schools, the largest ones receive roughly 300 students each year (El Comercio 2005), many of whom stay with host families.

To summarize, in the first part of this chapter, we saw that Cuenca is a conservative city with a rich cultural heritage that predates the Incas. Although isolated in some ways, it is nevertheless at the center of a massive wave of transnational migration that has linked the region to New York for at least three decades. In the late 1990s, Ecuador experienced a

dramatic devaluation of its currency that, along with the failure of half the country's banks, led to the worst economic crisis in its history. This crisis prompted many to seek new and innovative strategies for economic survival.

In the latter portion of the chapter, I reviewed the history of education abroad in Cuenca. Beginning with the Lewis and Clark College program in the 1980s, the number of credit-bearing programs for foreign university students has grown to more than a dozen. In addition, Cuenca has approximately 20 Spanish language schools, the largest of which have upwards of 300 students per year. These education abroad programs and language schools offer homestays with local families. In the next chapter, we will learn more about these host families and their interactions with international students.

Chapter 4: Host Families in Cuenca, Ecuador

Introduction

As we saw in the last chapter, in the past decade Cuenca has experienced significant growth in the education abroad sector. A growing number of US university-sponsored programs[46] and local language schools are bringing an increasing number of international students to Cuenca, many of whom stay with local host families to practice Spanish and to experience the culture firsthand. This chapter will examine the lives of these host families from the perspective of the families themselves to learn who they are and why they host, and to see how education abroad programs impact them socioculturally and economically. In particular, I will take a critical look at their motivations for hosting and at what transpires in their encounter with students. As I noted in Chapter 2, little attention has been given to the potential sociocultural and economic

46 In addition, there is also one program sponsored by a Canadian university.

impacts of education abroad on hosts. Given this dearth of information in education abroad, it is crucial to turn our attention to the group of hosts with whom students have the most contact—that is, host families.[47] This is particularly important given the empirical evidence from tourism that has shown that cross-cultural contact can have a negative sociocultural effect on locals.

I begin the chapter by examining the motivations of families to host students, as well as the process of becoming a host family. This discussion is framed especially in terms of fictive kinship and economics. I then analyze the hosting experience itself by utilizing the notion of the host-guest encounter from anthropological studies of tourism. My ethnographic analysis is based primarily on qualitative data that I collected during interviews with actors on both sides of the cross-cultural encounter, including host families, other locals, key school personnel, and students. In my discussion of the hosting experience, I include representative narratives and quotes to illustrate key points. The narratives and quotes from host families and other locals are my English translations of the interviews, which took place in Spanish (interviews with students and other foreigners took place in English). To protect their confidentiality, I have changed the names of the people with whom I

47 As Stephenson (1999) points out, there is also another group of hosts, local university professors, with whom students have substantial contact. Given the limited scope of my research, I have focused solely on host families.

consulted. Where appropriate, I also use quantitative data to enhance my analysis.

Before delving into my examination of host families, let us review the questions and assumptions that have guided my research. Prior to beginning my fieldwork, I presumed that host families in Cuenca were not representative of the population as a whole. From my experience as an education abroad professional in Cuenca, it seemed that most, if not all, host families were from just one sector of the population: the middle class. With this in mind, I wanted to learn more about who host families are—specifically, how they are different from the rest of the population—and why they decide to host. As we will see, the issue of class is an important criterion for language schools when deciding whether to accept a prospective host family.

Language schools and education abroad programs offer, and promote, homestays as a way to provide extracurricular opportunities for students to learn about the culture through firsthand experience and to practice Spanish. In other words, schools expect host families to incorporate students into family life, which then serves as a real-world learning laboratory. But how do host families and students actually interact? What happens in this host-guest encounter? How do host families share their culture with students?

As I noted in Chapter 2, the tourism and acculturation literature would suggest that host families—and not just students—experience some kind of sociocultural impact as a result of the host-guest encounter. Since this thesis is primarily a qualitative study, I have chosen to focus on host families' perceptions of the impact of hosting students on them. Specifically, I wanted to know whether hosting fosters in host families a greater appreciation of their own culture, as Esman (1984) and Besculides et al. (2002) observed have occurred in host-guest encounters in tourism, and as Stephenson (1999) suggested was the most salient outcome in her study of Chilean host families. Besculides et al. and Stephenson used questionnaires to measure this outcome, while Esman based her assessment on locals' temporary adoption of traits that she considered to be characteristics of traditional Cajun culture.

Why Families Host Students

In this chapter, I focus on host families' motivations for hosting and on their perceptions of what they receive from the experience. Central to this discussion is the notion of *fictive kinship*, which is defined as "a relationship, based not on blood or marriage but rather on religious or close friendship ties, that replicates many of the rights and obligations

usually associated with family ties" (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:189) or, more succinctly, as "relations modelled on kinship ties" (Keesing 1975:129). Fictive kinship is a logical concept to use in my research, because education abroad programs and language schools often speak of the relationships between host families and students using kinship terms. In addition, students sometimes begin to refer to their host families simply as their "families," suggesting that they begin to see their hosts as genuine kin. Marshall (1977:644) criticized terms such as "fictive" or "ritual" kinship for implying that such relations are not "real" and proposed the term *created kinship*. Nevertheless, *fictive kinship* remains the preferred term, as evidenced by recent studies (e.g., Ebaugh and Curry 2000; Holy 1996).

The study of kinship has a long, rich history in anthropology, which has provided its leading theoreticians (Holy 1996:1), beginning with Lewis Henry Morgan in the 1870s (Marshall 1977:644). During the first half of the twentieth century, anthropologists preoccupied themselves with the kinship structures of the societies they studied (Holy 1996:3). More recently, kinship lost its centrality as anthropological inquiries shifted their focus from the structure of social relations to the process of social life (Holy 1996:5). Whereas anthropologists once viewed kinship as a determinant of other cultural domains such as economic production and

exchange, they now view kinship and other domains as interrelated (Holy 1996:4-5).

At mid-century, as kinship itself was becoming a secondary focus in the discipline (Holy 1996:5), anthropologists were just beginning to study fictive forms of kinship (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:191). Among the first anthropologists to systematically study fictive kinship were Sidney Mintz and Eric Wolf (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:191), who examined *compadrazgo* (co-parenthood), a common form of fictive or ritual kinship in Latin America. Mintz and Wolf (1950:341) described compadrazgo as a triumvirate of relationships among an initiate (usually a child), the initiate's parents, and one or more ceremonial sponsors (the initiate's *padrino*, or godfather, and *madrina*, or godmother). Compadrazgo usually, but not always, stems from the Catholic ritual of baptism (Dávila 1971:396; Mintz and Wolf 1950:341).[48] Generally, sponsors are selected from non-kin or distant kin (Keesing 1975:130), thus extending one's kin network.

Some scholars (Dávila 1971:396; Keesing 1975:129; Mintz and Wolf 1950) suggest that the relationship between the parents and the sponsors —collectively referred to as *compadres* (co-parents)—is the most important one. It is this emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between

48 See Miles (2004) for a discussion of compadrazgo among *campesinos* (rural peasants) in southern Ecuador.

compadres that distinguishes compadrazgo from other forms of godparenthood (Dávila 1971:396). In this respect, although compadrazgo provides a general understanding of the importance of fictive kinship in Latin America, it is not a perfect framework for my research. In education abroad, it is rare for biological parents and host parents to meet, or even to have contact with each other, and their relationship is minimal.

A more useful focus for my purposes is the relationship between "initiates" (i.e., students) and "sponsors" (i.e., host parents). Scholars (Dávila 1971:397; Ebaugh and Curry 2000:195) note that the sponsors have multiple responsibilities, including instructing the initiate in religion and morals, raising the initiate if the parents die or are otherwise unable to do so, and providing assistance. Such assistance may include lending money, offering a place to stay, providing contacts or other connections, etc. In other words, these "fictive parents" help to enculturate and to take care of the initiate. In a homestay setting, host families are responsible for teaching students about the culture (i.e., enculturating the students).

Ebaugh and Curry (2000) have proposed that migrants are another form of initiate, in that they often receive support from fictive kin in the form of social capital. These fictive kin may be the person's padrinos or other people from the destination community. For example, Miles (2004) describes how one transnational migrant, already well established in New York, helped a young man from Cuenca to migrate as well, lending him the

money to pay the *coyote* (smuggler), providing a place to stay, and connecting him with a job.

Ebaugh and Curry's (2000) notion of fictive kin as social capital is useful for examining the host-guest relationship in education abroad. In this context, we can think of students as "migrants" who rely on the social capital that their fictive kin (i.e., host families) provide. In addition, as Dann (1996) has suggested, there is also a fictive kin relationship between "tourists" (i.e., students) and the "tourist industry" (i.e., education abroad programs and language schools). In other words, students have two sets of fictive kin, both of which provide social capital that help them to adapt to their new surroundings and to survive in a new culture. Bourdieu describes social capital as

> the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. [2002:286]

This type of capital involves social relationships in neighborhoods, the workplace, or among kin (Bourdieu 2002:287) that "can serve to enhance an individual's access to opportunities, information, material resources, and social status" (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:190). It is important to note that the admission of new members to a group

necessarily exposes it—and its identity—to redefinition, alteration, and adulteration (Bourdieu 2002:287). This would suggest that host families also benefit from social capital, by extending it to the students they host. In turn, host families obtain prestige by associating with foreigners.

Blanca, a *señora* who has been hosting for just a few years, clearly expressed the notion of fictive kinship when she summarized her experience: "It is as if each one is another daughter that has returned home after living far away for many years." When a student returns home and does not keep in touch, the host family may feel that it has lost a child (Sumka 2000:27). Indeed, several host families suggested that they do not always think of students merely as guests in their home but as fictive kin:

> "I do not differentiate between the student and my children —they are all my children." —Patricia

> "There was one in particular who stole my heart—he was one more son in my life ... the students call me *mamá*." —Julia

> "They are like my family. They *are* my family. I give them the same rules that I give to my children." —Beatriz

> "[Mary] came to have great affection for our family. She always says that we are her Ecuadorian parents." —Galo

"Some call me '*mamá*,' which gives me satisfaction." —Elsa

As these quotes suggest, there is often a mutual feeling of fictive kinship that develops between host family and student.

Host families may claim, as Patricia did, that they do not differentiate between students and their own children, but in reality, the guest siblings have a special status in the family not enjoyed by their host counterparts. Generally speaking, over the last decade or so, host families have begun to offer students significantly more independence than they allot to their own children. Several host mothers mentioned the importance of allowing students to come and go as they please, even though they do not let their own children do so. This level of independence has developed at the urging of the schools and programs, who have made these requests in response to student complaints about curfews and not being allowed to go out in the evening to socialize with friends. In addition, as one homestay coordinator made clear, students have paid money to stay with a host family, so they should not be expected to do household chores. Instead, students should be served. On one hand, this situation would suggest that students are treated more as guests than as fictive kin. On the other, it is similar to the treatment that out-of-town relatives would receive when they come to visit.

In some cases, host families do expect students to help out around the house, at least with some tasks. For example, one host mother told me that each person in her family—including the student—is responsible for taking their dirty clothes downstairs on wash day (which occurs once a week when the *señora* hires someone to do the laundry). Failure to do so means that that person's laundry will not be washed that week. No family member—not even the student—is given any leniency in this respect. In other cases, especially for summer- or semester-long stays, students sometimes volunteer to help out around the house, as they and their hosts become more comfortable with each other.

I certainly witnessed, and experienced, fictive kinship firsthand when I lived with a host family in Cuenca during my year abroad. From the first day, my host siblings referred to me as "*ñaño*" ("brother" in Quichua),[49] a term they still use with me some 14 years later. As well, I still recall my first day of school in Cuenca back in June 1992. As my host mother dropped me off at the front door of the school, she said, "*Chao,*[50] *mi hijo. Cuídate.*" (Bye, my son. Take care.) And recently, I ran across one of the letters that she wrote after I had returned to the United States; it was signed "*tu mami mona*" (your Ecuadorian mom).[51]

49 Although Quichua is spoken only by *indígenas* (indigenous people), many Quichua words have entered the colloquial speech of *mestizos* and *blancos* in Cuenca.

50 Ecuadorians spell the Italian word *ciao* phonetically, replacing the letters *ci* with *ch*, which results in the equivalent Spanish sound.

51 Literally, *tu mami mona* means "your monkey mom." In Ecuador, the term *mono*

The notion of fictive kinship in the host family-student relationship extends beyond just using terms such as "brother" or "son." After losing touch with my host mother for a few years, we were accidentally—but pleasantly—reunited during my fieldwork. Following the obligatory greetings and inquiries about how we were and what we had done in the last few years, she affectionately chided me for having lost touch: "Listen, you ingrate, why haven't you written? That is something you inherited from your father, because you did not get it from me." Similarly, Heather, a student from a medium public university, told me that at an extended family gathering, her host father introduced her to the relatives as his daughter and later remarked, "She is pretty smart. She gets that from my side of the family."

These examples suggest, as scholars have claimed, that fictive kinship transforms the parties involved into genuine kin (Ebaugh and Curry 2000; Marshall 1977). Because these relationships are seen as *real*, fictive kinship includes the same marriage restrictions and incest taboo that would be associated with blood kin (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:202).[52] The incest taboo surfaced unexpectedly during an interview with Eulalia, a

---

often is used in place of *costeño* to refer to someone from the coast, especially someone from Guayaquil. My host family was originally from Guayaquil but had moved to Cuenca a few years prior to hosting me.

52 In compadrazgo, these restrictions extend to the sponsors themselves, who would then be prohibited from marrying each other (Ebaugh and Curry 2000:202).

señora who has hosted for several years. Smiling mischievously, she explained:

> I treat them just like my daughters. I introduce them as sisters to my daughters, and I tell them, 'I am your mother, and this is your father' ... I prefer to receive young women, because I have two daughters [but] once I hosted a young man. Apparently, he fell in love with my older daughter. He told a friend of mine that he could not tell my daughter, because it was incest—she was his sister. So it has worked for me!

As we can see from Eulalia's response, sometimes families intentionally create fictive kinship as a way to make students feel comfortable and to incorporate them into family life.

However, while fictive kinship is a concept that many host families mentioned in the course of describing their experiences, none explicitly mentioned it as a motivation for hosting. In contrast, two percent of Chilean families cited "having another child" as an advantage of hosting students (Stephenson 1999:17). Several of the *señoras* whom I interviewed mentioned that they started hosting because they had empty space and enjoyed having company, which Stephenson (1999) cited as well. For example, Estela, a widow, explained why she started hosting students:

> For me, foreigners are no burden at all ... I am alone now, and I want to have other people around. I like to cook, to

> serve. All my life, I have served others—my husband, my children. I enjoy it.

One could argue that by hosting students, Estela is creating new kin (i.e., fictive children) and thus enhancing her status as a mother.[53] As some scholars have suggested, in Latin America a middle-class woman's status often is based on her domestic responsibilities as a mother (Ehlers 1991:10; Jaramillo 1980:411; Miles 1997:59; Miles and Buechler 1997:2). Indeed, according to the traditional Hispanic model of gender roles, a woman is ideally relegated to the household and to her role as a mother (Miles 1994:140 and 1997:59). Even women who have prestigious jobs "are considered first and foremost women, and as much, their most important role is ultimately within the household" (Miles 1997:59), although middle- and upper-class women in Cuenca traditionally have a maid (and perhaps other servants) to take care of most of the domestic chores (Miles 1994:140). This model would explain why a professional, middle-class woman in Cuenca might look to hosting students, which serves as a means to fulfill her personal needs as a mother and, therefore, to enhance her status, while at the same time providing a crucial source of income for her family.

53 Sumka (2001) used the notion of hospitality to describe similar comments, as well as the general concern that host families expressed for the well-being of students.

With regard to occupation, there is no significant difference between host mothers and women in general with regard to the percentage who are housewives (61.5% and 42.1%, respectively).[54] This suggests that host mothers are no more (nor less) likely than women as a whole to dedicate themselves to domestic responsibilities. Moreover, using chi-square (alpha=0.05), there is no significant difference between the three language schools with regard to occupation of host mothers, even though the percentage of host mothers who are housewives appears to vary substantially from a low of 52.6% to a high of 75.0% (60% of host mothers at the third school are housewives).[55] This suggests that host mothers from the various schools can be considered as a homogeneous group for the purpose of comparison with women as a whole.

There is, however, a very highly significant difference between host mothers and all women with regard to occupation (chi-square test, alpha=0.001). This difference lies in the category of businesswomen, which has a higher percentage of host mothers than women in general; there is no significant difference for other occupational categories

54 The Ecuadorian population census tables of economic activity and inactivity (INEC 2001) aggregate women into 5-year age groups (e.g., 25-29, 30-34, etc.) through age 64; all women age 65 and older are aggregated into a single group. Because of this, I have decided to limit my comparison of host mothers and all women to just the ages of 25-64. (Only one host mother is actually older than this.)

55 The school with the highest percentage of host mothers who are housewives actually prefers host families in which someone—generally the *señora*—is at home during the day.

(including housewife, as mentioned in the previous paragraph). Host mothers who self-identified as businesswomen usually are involved in owning or managing small businesses that often are home-based, including art gallery, hair salon, interior design, and telephone repair. This suggests that host mothers tend to work in more professional capacities (and, perhaps, are more educated) than women as a whole. Moreover, this would also suggest that host families are from the middle class (and perhaps even the upper class), but certainly not from the lower class.

Fictive kinship is, of course, only one motivation for hosting students. At the beginning of each interview, I asked host families how they got into hosting. Some cited multiple reasons. Nearly half mentioned that they learned about the possibility of hosting after talking with friends or relatives who had hosted students already. This suggests that social networks play an important role in recruiting new host families and in prompting families to consider hosting. Others, such as Josefina, had considered hosting but did not make the final decision until speaking with others:

> My husband and I considered hosting. At first, he objected because he thought that we were going to lose our privacy. But we talked with other families, and they said that the students spend very little time at home ... and [that] they did not lose their privacy like we thought.

Whereas the families with whom Josefina spoke might be suggesting that they do not want to spend too much time with the students, later in this chapter we will see that several of the host families complained that students did not spend *enough* time with them.

The next most cited reason for hosting international students was the opportunity to learn about other cultures and people, as well as to share Ecuadorian culture with others:

> "Primarily, I was hoping to learn about other cultures. I am very friendly. I like to meet other people and exchange ideas." —Ximena

> "We have traveled a bit. We have always tried to learn about other cultures. I imagine that because of travel agencies, they [students] have the idea that we are all indigenous, so we wanted to show them that we are civilized people." —Galo

> "I am in the program because I want my children to learn about other cultures and people, to see that we are all alike, so that they might adapt better when they go somewhere else. Sharing with other cultures and learning are important things." —Julieta

Cultural reasons topped the list of advantages of hosting students in Stephenson's (1999) study of Chilean host families, and cultural exchange was also a common response in Sumka's (2001) study of host families in Quito. Cultural exchange is, logically, what schools and programs would

consider to be the ideal motivation of host families, as Pilar, a homestay coordinator, suggested when she said that an interest in cultural sharing is an important characteristic that she looks for in prospective families. In fact, a perusal of program and school websites reveals that learning about and experiencing the culture are almost universally-mentioned reasons for living with a host family.

In addition, cultural exchange is part of the notion of intercultural understanding that is cited frequently as a goal of education abroad and which has been studied extensively (e.g., Bochner et al. 1979; Carlson and Widaman 1988; Dwyer 2004). Cultural exchange is also cited as a motivation in tourism, especially cultural tourism (e.g., Smith 2003; Wickens 2005). Indeed, it is this motivation that distinguishes cultural tourism from other varieties of alternative tourism. Just as cultural tourists participate in cultural or ethnic tourism out of a genuine desire to interact with other cultures, I suggest that families in Cuenca choose hosting over other economic activities for similar reasons.

Some *señoras* mentioned curiosity or the novelty of seeing a *gringo*[56] as their motivation for hosting students:

> "I wanted to see if it was true that *gringos* were really cold people." —Julieta

56 *Gringo* refers to a foreigner, particularly one with pale skin and light-colored hair. In Ecuador, the term is rarely derogatory (in contrast to Mexico).

> "Seeing a *gringuito*[57] was a novelty. I was passing by the school with my children, and they said that they wanted to have a *gringuito* in the house. So we went inside to speak with the homestay coordinator, and later someone came and visited our home." —Clara

In Julieta's case, she seems to be indicating a genuine interest in learning about people from other cultures, specifically, in dispelling a stereotype expressed by many in Cuenca that *gringos* are cold people. I will discuss this stereotype later in the chapter. Clara's comment about the novelty could be interpreted either as curiosity or as an aspiration for enhanced prestige by associating with foreigners. In Stephenson's (1999) study, two percent of Chilean families cited prestige as an advantage of hosting students.

Several families also mentioned that it was actually the *school* that asked them to become hosts. Schools might take the initiative because of the proximity of the family's home (to accommodate students who are not able to walk very far) or because a family member works or studies at the school. For example, Flor said that the school sought her out because she lived in the city center and it wanted a nearby option to offer to students.

57 Cuencans are known for their frequent use of the diminutive (marked with the suffix *-ito*), hence Clara's use of *gringuito* as a term of endearment.

A couple of families mentioned their desire to practice English as a motivation for hosting. Stephenson (1999) and Sumka (2001) reported this as well in their studies. Host families in Cuenca pointed out that there has not been much opportunity to do so, since schools have policies requiring that only Spanish be used (exceptions may be made for emergencies, of course). These policies reflect the focus of these programs on Spanish language learning.

Finally, some families acknowledged that the need to supplement their income was a significant motivation for deciding to host students. Other scholars have reported similar findings: ten percent of Chilean families in Stephenson's (1999) study cited economic reasons, and Sumka (2001) mentions economics as a secondary motivation for families in Quito. Given the poor state of Ecuador's economy in recent years, I suspected that hosting might be an economic survival strategy for families in Cuenca, but I was surprised that several of them admitted it to me quite openly (perhaps this is an indication of the rapport that I had developed with them). In Cuenca, families receive $10 per day for hosting a student. This is a significant amount, given that the Ecuadorian government estimates a typical family of five requires $437.41 per month to cover basic expenses (INEC 2006).[58] Students generally stay with a host family for a

58 This refers to the *canasta analítica familiar básica*, an economic indicator that is adjusted on a monthly basis. The figure I cite here is from December 2005; by September 2006, it had risen slightly to $450.83 (INEC 2006).

minimum of one to two weeks (and sometimes for several months), which means that the income from hosting can have a significant impact on the family budget.

While few host families mentioned economics as an important motivation for hosting, it is, nevertheless, a factor that cannot be ignored. In each interview, I asked how long the family had been hosting and how many students had been their guests. One third of the families provided incomplete data, as they recalled either how long they had been hosting or the total number of students, but not both.

For the two thirds that responded with complete data,[59] I calculated the students per year so that I could compare new host families with those who had been hosting for many years. This statistic ranged from 0.9 to 28 students per year, with a median of 3.2. I did not collect data on the actual number of days that students were with their host families, which would have permitted a more accurate calculation. If I were to do this again, I would carefully examine school records to collect data on the number of students and nights, as well as how long each family has hosted. Without data on actual lengths of stay, I arbitrarily chose an average duration of two weeks.[60] Using this average and a rate of $10 per day, I then

59 In some cases, host families provided the approximate number of students hosted per year instead of the total.

60 This figure is arbitrary in the sense that it is not based on the actual number of days that these particular families hosted students. It was not, however, invented in a vacuum; it is a figure that I calculated in 2002 while I was an employee of one of the

calculated each family's approximate annual income from hosting, which ranged from $140 to more than $3900. To make these figures more meaningful, I then calculated this annual hosting income as a percentage of the *canasta analítica familiar básica* (CAFB) for December 2005 (see INEC 2006). The results ranged from more than two percent up to nearly 75 percent.

I caution the reader that these figures are merely for illustration and in some cases are grossly inaccurate. In the case of at least one family on the lower end, the one student it hosts each year stays for approximately two months. Adjusting for this longer duration, its annual hosting income rises to nearly 10 percent of the CAFB (instead of the two percent I calculated initially). In the case of Dora, a *señora* who has been hosting for two years, I calculated an annual income of more than $2500 (48 percent of CAFB), yet she gave me an actual figure of approximately $800 (15 percent of CAFB) for the previous year and predicted that her hosting income for the current year would be even lower. Dora said that while she hosts a lot of students, most stay with her for just a few nights (i.e., less than a week), so her hosting income is actually quite low. Nevertheless, the income she earns makes a difference in her family's

language schools in Cuenca from data on individual students in non-credit language immersion programs (i.e., excluding group programs sponsored by US universities). I am recalling this figure from memory, as I do not have access to those records.

budget. As she explained, "we do not depend on the income from the school, because we would die that way. But it helps."

In short, regardless of whether a family hosts one student for several weeks each year or many students for a shorter duration, hosting has a significant economic impact on its income. Nevertheless, this income is merely supplementary; host families must seek income from other sources as well.

Through my interviews with host families, I was struck by the fact that many of them did not seem to consider hosting as being about only cultural exchange or income. Instead, they seemed to have come to grips with the idea that it could be about *both*. In contrast, schools and programs have a tendency to see these motivations as mutually exclusive, although staff members understand the economic situation that host families face.

Tania, a former homestay coordinator, said she recognizes that many families depend on the income from hosting students; however, economics cannot be their only motive. As Pilar (a current homestay coordinator) suggested, genuine interest in cultural exchange is a key criterion in evaluating prospective families and in deciding whether to continue working with host families.

Indeed, schools determine which families receive students and how often, as well as what should be provided and for what price Given this power inequality, some families may feel obliged to host a student whenever the school calls:

> "One year, around the time of Cuenca's independence celebration, I was going to go to Guayaquil, but the school called to see if I could host. I said, 'send the student, I'll stay here.' You have to host when the school needs you, not just when you want." —Paulina

Paulina's statement reflects not only a power inequality between school and host family, but also a genuine desire on her part to collaborate with the school and to share her cultural knowledge. She also explained,

> [I switched to this school,] because the other school gave me only one student per year, and to others it gave two or three. I do not consider that fair, because I am a teacher, and I do not want to wait a whole year to be able to explain to another student things about our culture.

> Other than that, the schools with which I have worked are similar, because they pay the same and they have the same expectations. For the families, it is not about money, but rather new experiences. There is the economic part, but I place more value on the experience that I have with students.

As Paulina suggests, families are not completely powerless, and they sometimes shop around for a better deal (e.g., higher pay or more

students) from another school. Paulina is not alone; several of the other families that I interviewed have also hosted with two or three different schools. On the other hand, some families have hosted with only one school and feel a certain sense of loyalty to it, even though they are asked to host students less frequently than they would prefer.

Carmen and Pilar are the homestay coordinators with whom I spoke the most about the requirements for becoming a host family. They emphasized the importance of class and location, as well as motivation, in evaluating prospective hosts. For example, Pilar uses these criteria when meeting with a prospective host family for the first time:

> I ask where they live. How long does it take to walk [to the school]? I want to know what class of family it is, who they are. One realizes what class they belong to, what they are looking for. Cultural sharing is important for us, but it is apparent that some are interested only in the money.

Those families who appear to be interested primarily in the money generally do not proceed past the initial inquiry stage, as Pilar feels that they would not fulfill the school's goal of providing a comfortable, educational environment for students.

Carmen also discussed the process of evaluating a prospective family and described what she considers to be the ideal host family:

> First you get to know the house. In that sense, yes, we are a bit selective, in order to provide a good environment. I also

> have to explain things to the family so that they know what I expect. Sometimes I even sit on the bed to see how it is.

> I chat with them to find out what their reasons are [for hosting], what they are expecting from the student, what they want to share with the student.

> The ideal family? Starting with the house, that they have a nice place. Also, they need to be a stable family and open-minded to hosting someone from another culture.

Pilar made it quite clear that while her school wants host families to integrate students into their daily lives, there is also an expectation of comfort: "students are here to be attended to, so they do not need to clean the house." She also added that the school has guidelines on how host families should prepare food for students and that they should boil water for drinking (or provide bottled water). Other schools have similar guidelines for host families. As these comments suggest, language schools understandably want to provide guests (i.e., students) with a comfortable and safe environment and a positive impression of the city. In this way, the schools are trying to meet guests' expectations in a way that is similar to how the tourism industry caters to tourists (Chambers 2000).

However, whereas their comments show obvious concern for students' welfare, they did not express similar concern for the host

families. This is not to say that schools are uninterested in the host families' welfare. Indeed, John, the director of one of the schools, acknowledged that his school could improve its relations with host families, especially in terms of providing a better support structure, including training in intercultural understanding:

> I wouldn't claim that we provide any profound understanding of other cultures. There are still cultural misunderstandings; they [host families] still have it wrong. Sure, there is some understanding, but not much. We do not help the families like we should. I could use the analogy of dropping an individual student in a foreign city to sink or swim. We have weekly meetings with students, but nothing similar with the host families. This is regrettable. We need to do a better job toward intercultural understanding and teaching.

The issue of class that I mentioned above can also be seen through a spatial analysis of host family residences. As Pilar indicated, proximity to the school is an important criterion, which might suggest that most host families would live in the city center, where the language schools are located. However, other factors, such as class, come into play as well, so there are many host families that reside in other areas of the city. Indeed, just one-quarter of the host families in this study live in Cuenca's historic city center, which corresponds roughly to the *parroquias* (parishes) of Gil Ramírez Dávalos and El Sagrario (see Figure 4.4). Cuenca is divided into several parroquias, which provide a convenient geographic unit for

analyzing the distribution of host families throughout the city, in much the same way that census tracts would be used for similar analyses in the United States.[61] Of the one-quarter of families that live in the city center, only a few reside in the core ("*área de primer orden*"); most live in the periphery ("*área de respeto*") that serves as a transition between the historic core and newer areas. The remaining three-quarters of host families reside in newer parts of Cuenca, particularly in the southern and western areas, which Lowder (1990:116) reports were areas settled by the middle and upper classes. As Figure 4 indicates, host families are concentrated primarily in the western half of the city and secondarily in the south, with none residing in the eastern parishes.

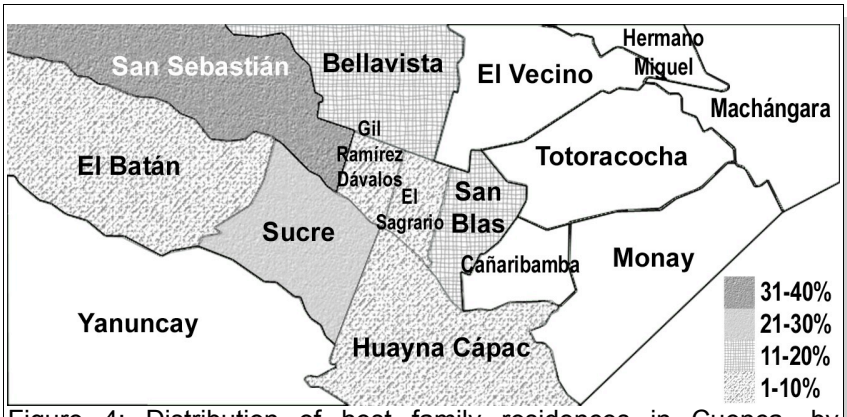


Figure 4: Distribution of host family residences in Cuenca, by *parroquia* (parish). The historic city center roughly corresponds to the parroquias of Gil Ramírez Dávalos and El Sagrario. The Tomebamba River, which flows from the upper left (northwest) toward the lower right (southeast), forms the boundary between several parishes (e.g., between San Sebastián and El Batán, and between San Blas and Huayna Cápac).

61 However, parroquias have a religious origin and may vary considerably in population.

Parroquia San Sebastián, which extends westward from the edge of the city center core, has the highest percentage of host families (35 percent). The western region of San Sebastián, especially along and in the immediate vicinity of Avenida Ordóñez Lasso, has some of Cuenca's nicest and most expensive neighborhoods, including the area around the Hotel Oro Verde, one of the city's best hotels. The fact that the Eljuri family, one of Ecuador's richest and most influential families, lives in this area is an indication of the economic prosperity of the parish's residents. This is the area that a 1944 city plan designated for a "superior residential zone" (Lowder 1990:116).

Parroquia Sucre, located on the south side of the Tomebamba River, has the second highest percentage of host families (22 percent), and it is followed by two parishes adjacent to the historic city center, Bellavista and San Blas, each of which has 13 percent. Four other parishes—Huayna Cápac, El Batán, Gil Ramírez Dávalos, and El Sagrario—form the bottom tier in terms of percentage of host families. All of the parishes mentioned above are within "reasonable" walking distance (i.e., 30 minutes or less) from the language schools, which are located in or near the historic city center. Hermano Miguel, Machángara, Monay, and Yanuncay parishes are too far from the city center for walking to be feasible, so these are not areas where language schools normally would place students.

On the other hand, portions of Cañaribamba, El Vecino, and Totoracocha parishes *are* within walking distance; however, they are considered dangerous and not the kind of area where schools would want to place students. When I asked Tania (a former homestay coordinator) about these parishes, she replied:

> Really, one of the basic requirements for us is the distance of the families—the closer to ... the school, the better for students in terms of time and transportation. Another very important thing is safety. These parishes or neighborhoods that you mention are distant and not very safe for foreigners. They [students] go out a lot at night, and it would not be a good idea for them to return late to these areas. Also, these areas are not very picturesque, and in general the families that live there do not have very good habits, which things we want to offer to our students.

The last part of Tania's response suggests that these eastern parishes are lower class neighborhoods. Indeed, as Lowder (1990:116) reports, this area was designated by a 1944 city plan for industrial use and working class homes. Many of the people who live in these areas work as street vendors, custodians, or as menial laborers. As such, they work long hours and may not have time to spend with guests. Moreover, their residences are humble, and they may not have adequate space for a guest, let alone for the family itself (see Miles 2004). In addition, the *Terminal Terrestre* (bus station) is located on Avenida España in the western corner of Parroquia Totoracocha. The area surrounding the terminal, which spills

into Parroquia El Vecino, is congested and infamous for crime. Mariscal Lamar Airport, which opened in 1932 (Secretaría Municipal 1932), is also located along Avenida España and is surrounded by the industrial and commercial land use one would expect around an airport. The *Parque Industrial* (Industrial Park), constructed beginning in the 1960s (Espinoza 2001:49), is located in the southern tip of Parroquia Hermano Miguel, just beyond the airport.

In summary, families decide to host students for a variety of reasons. A primary motivation, although not explicitly expressed by host families, is the creation of fictive kin, which enhances women's status as mothers and offers them prestige from associating with foreigners. Another primary motivation that *was* expressed are social networks, which serve as a means for families to find out about the possibility of hosting and to learn about the advantages (and disadvantages) from experienced hosts. Other motivations include a desire to learn about other cultures and to teach students about Ecuadorian culture, curiosity about foreigners, the opportunity to practice English, and the need to supplement the family's income for economic survival. In addition, sometimes schools seek out new host families among their students and employees. Schools look for middle-class families who live in Cuenca's nicer neighborhoods in an effort to provide students with a safe, comfortable environment. Additionally, schools expect families to

integrate students into their daily lives and to follow established guidelines on the preparation of food. In these ways, schools, like the tourist industry, tend to cater to the expectations—both expressed and perceived —of their guests.

The Hosting Experience

We now look at the hosting experience from the perspective of the host families themselves. As I noted in Chapter 2, although the term "host-guest encounter" suggests a binary opposition, a triumvirate of actors is involved (Chambers 2000). In the context of education abroad, these actors are students, host families, and programs or schools (i.e., mediators or culture brokers). As Mathieson and Wall (1982:163) suggested, the nature and quality of the interaction is dependent on the interplay of these actors, as well as on the context in which the encounter takes place. Although my analysis in this section focuses mostly on what I learned from host families, I have also included the perspectives of students and schools where appropriate. In this way, I have heeded Stronza's (2001) call to include people on both sides of the encounter. In this section, I examine the host-guest encounter in homestays, beginning with the anticipation of hosting the first student and proceeding through a

typical weekday and a typical weekend. I also discuss some of the problems that occur in the encounter.

Mi primer gringuito[62]

Going into any host-guest encounter, each actor (or group of actors) has its own expectations about the interaction that might occur. Prior to meeting their host families, students often become nervous and apprehensive. *Who are these strangers with whom I am going to live? What if we do not get along? What will they feed me?* Back in June 1992, as I waited in the lobby of the Hotel El Dorado in Cuenca, I was so scared to meet my host family that I actually hoped that they would not show up. As each family arrived, my level of apprehension skyrocketed and then quickly subsided when the homestay coordinator called out someone else's name.

Then I heard my name called, and I nervously approached my new host mother and brothers and greeted them in very broken Spanish. We collected my luggage and headed for their car. As we walked down Gran Colombia (the "main street" in Cuenca's city center), not a word was uttered for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, I broke the ice and admitted that I was nervous. Much to my relief, my host mother looked

62 "My first little *gringo*"

over at me and sheepishly said, "*yo también*" ("me, too"). I later learned that I was the first student they had ever hosted.

Indeed, students are not alone in feeling anxious about meeting their hosts. Host families expressed some of the same anxious sentiments, especially when describing their first time hosting a student, but they also suggested that such fears were unfounded:

> "What habits might they have? The anticipation, the uncertainty, the fear … but everything was fine. One does not know what the student will be like. Even now, there is still a little bit of fear before a new student arrives. [Hosting the first student] was the most beautiful experience of my life." —Clara

> "Perhaps the first girl was the best, because she was the first one. We thought that it was going to be difficult to adapt to a person from another culture, but it was not that way at all. We bonded very well." —Esperanza

> "I had a lot of anxiety, but we had a very good experience with the first girl. My children became very attached to her, and I had a lot of affection for her. My daughter cried when the girl left. She was like a daughter." —Bélgica

> "I started [hosting] precisely with Mary. It was the most significant experience for us. She came to have a great affection for our family. She always says that we are her Ecuadorian parents. She was a model girl, extraordinary. When she left, it was very difficult for us. She always adapted to our customs, even though they are very different

> ... later, we had two or three others, but there was not the same relationship that we had with Mary." —Galo

Apprehension on the part of host families is understandable. After all, they are opening up their homes to strangers with whom they will be sharing close quarters. Doing so necessarily requires losing some degree of privacy, and it can also disrupt a family's regular habits. For example, Vicente, a long-time host father, told me about the disruptions in his household:

> My seven-year-old daughter asks why she always has to lend her room [to the student] and her older sister does not. She also wants to know why she cannot go into the student's room, if she always goes into her sister's room.

> And I also have to change some of my habits. Within our family, there is a certain level of confidence. But when we are hosting girls, I can no longer come out of my room in pajamas. And I have to change my schedule of when I use the bathroom. I do not want to inconvenience the student. And I try to keep a distance. For example, I try to not be home alone with the girl. Once it happened, so I locked myself in my room and did not come out until she left. That put me behind schedule, but I did not want to make the girl feel uncomfortable.

Vicente's reaction may be a bit exaggerated, but it may demonstrate his concern for the student's comfort. He may, in effect, be catering to the

perceived needs of his guests, just as we have seen occurs in tourism (Chambers 2000).

On the other hand, Vicente may be aware that some host fathers and brothers have been accused of acting inappropriately toward female students. When a female student reports such an incident, the school removes her from the home and finds a new host family. With this in mind, Vicente's behavior would not be exaggerated at all but instead could be understood as a defense mechanism. This is a valid concern, because several families over the years have been removed from schools' host rosters after the report of such an incident.

Nuestro arroz de cada día[63]

Following Spradley's (1979) advice, I started each host family interview with a "grand tour" question by asking the *señora* to describe a typical weekday and weekend when she is hosting a student. Their responses about weekdays repeated a similar, and somewhat routine, rundown of the three daily meals, while comments about weekends described a bit more variation in activities.

A typical weekday begins with breakfast, which might include some combination of fresh fruit juice, a ham and cheese sandwich, *mote*

63 "Our daily rice"

(hominy) with scrambled eggs, fruit, and coffee or hot chocolate. Usually only the *señora* eats breakfast with the student, whose morning schedule often conflicts with that of the rest of the family. Students usually rush through breakfast before heading off to class, so there is not much opportunity for conversation. Indeed, whatever conversation that might take place is generally limited to inquiries such as how the student slept and what plans the student has for the day.

Lunch, on the other hand, provides greater opportunities for conversation, as Cuenca still observes the traditional *siesta* when many stores and offices close for a break from 13:00 to 15:00. Lunch is the main meal of the day, and most families—especially host families—return home at midday to eat together and to converse:

> "At lunch we all try to get together, including my married son who has his own house. We share lunch. Sometimes we go to my daughter-in-law's house, and other times we eat at home." —Diana

> "We come home for lunch. Everyone is here. We are together for about an hour, and during that time we converse. Afterwards, I wash the dishes, and we continue talking." —Esperanza

> "For lunch, the whole family gathers to share and converse. The entire family is involved in the dialog ... afterwards, we all clean up the kitchen. My children help me, and sometimes the students pitch in as well." —Bélgica

In this respect, Cuenca remains more traditional (and conservative) than Ecuador's two larger cities, many of whose residents have a half-hour lunch break at midday instead of a two-hour siesta.

Schools in Cuenca take the siesta into account when scheduling classes and other activities, so that students can take part in this important daily family ritual. For example, one school provides students with the following advice about living with a host family:

> It is expected that every member of the household (and sometimes extended family members) be home at mealtime [, which] is considered *family time* ... the entire family often will wait for every person to come home before they begin to eat. For these reasons, it is of paramount importance to be courteous and arrive home *on time* for every meal.

Lunch typically begins with a homemade soup such as *locro de papas* (a creamy soup made with a potato base), which may be accompanied by *mote* or popcorn. The main course generally includes fresh fruit juice, a generous serving of white rice, meat (usually chicken or beef, but sometimes fish), and vegetables. During lunch, host families converse with students about how classes went in the morning and what plans they have for the afternoon, although conversations occasionally delve into deeper topics:

> "Lunch is a lively family gathering. We converse about various topics—for example, we might talk about politics, *coyotes* [smugglers], migration, and so on." —Clara

> "We talk about a lot of things, such as politics, religion, the city, places they can visit, questions the students have such as the government of Abdalá Bucaram, and what celebrations are like both here and in their country." —Rebeca

> "We converse about globalization, Ecuador as an oil-producing country, how the president is doing (politics), movies." —Elsa

Conversations often continue after lunch:

> "After the meal, there is a bit of *sobremesa* [after-dinner conversation]. It lasts only about 5-10 minutes, because students have homework to do. We ask them questions such as how things are going, how their friends are. In general, everyone takes part." —Diana

> "When we have a student here, after eating we stay at the table longer. There is more *sobremesa*. That does not happen when there is not a student." —Mercedes

As the siesta comes to a close, students head back to school, and host families usually do not see them again until supper. Like lunch, supper is also a time for conversation:

> "At supper, students share in absolutely everything. Everyone is here, or just about everyone. We converse about the day ... if the student says that class was boring, we ask what about it was boring and why." —Patricia

> "We are all here for supper to spend time together and talk. Generally, students have a lot of homework, so we try to converse at mealtime." —Esperanza

> "Everyone is here for supper. We chat about lots of things, including what we did in the afternoon. Sometimes we continue talking for quite awhile." —Bélgica

Supper often has the same menu as lunch, except with smaller portions or without the soup. Other families prefer a lighter menu of a sandwich or piece of bread and a hot beverage such as tea. But the menu is not always traditional; Clara smiled as she told me about her family's weekly menu diversion:

> On Tuesdays, we have pizza, because Pizza Hut has a family special that night. Before, I did not care for pizza, but I noticed that students really like it, so I thought it would be nice to offer them something special.

Here, we see that Clara began catering to students by offering them a type of food that her family had not considered part of its diet. Pizza is by no means new to Cuenca. Since at least the early 1990s, when I first visited Cuenca, there have been Italian restaurants that serve pizza, and Pizza Hut

opened about a decade ago. Nevertheless, pizza is still seen as foreign and is not a regular part of the diet of Cuencan host families.

In the evening, families usually watch television or a video, and they invite students to join them, although students often decline the invitation because they have homework to do. Some families offer to help students with their homework:

> "We are very willing to help students with their homework. For example, we review their assignments when they ask for help." —Daniel

Julia echoed the desire to help students learn:

> We ask them if they need help with their assignments. Sometimes there are words or phrases such as *coma nomás* [go ahead and eat] that they do not understand, so they ask, '*¿Qué es eso?*' [What is that?]. They also might ask about the old stories of Cuenca such as the headless priest.[64] Sometimes we do not know, but the student does, because they talked about it in class. Our mission is not to learn English but to help students with their Spanish.

Here, Julia reiterates the justification for students living with host families, which I mentioned earlier—that is, the opportunity to practice Spanish and to learn about the culture. In the process, as Julia suggests, host families occasionally become "tourists" of their own culture (Esman 1984). That is, while they are hosting a student, they learn more about

64 See Miles (1994:150).

their own culture and their city. Bélgica, for example, takes students to a different church each Sunday, even though she normally attends mass at the same one every week (that is, when she is not hosting). This is not unlike the situation in which a local resident anywhere in the world goes about his regular business, "stuck" in the daily routine, without exploring or experiencing local events, museums, etc. How many of us go to these places only when we have guests?

Most families suggested that weekends offered more time for interaction, although they noted that students often have day-long excursions that may conflict with family activities:

> "On weekends, I have taken students to Baños to go swimming, or to Gualaceo and Chordeleg. Occasionally, we go to the Mall del Río to eat lunch, and then I show them the stores and indicate what they can buy that is made here—for example, artisanry such as vases and dishes. But sometimes students are busy on weekends with excursions to Cajas, Ingapirca, and so on." —Ruth

> "Many Saturdays, students go on their [school] excursions. But on weekends when they are here, we head for the countryside, we go shopping, or we get together with our extended family." —Julia

> "On weekends when the student does not have an excursion, we go camping in the countryside where we have some property and an old adobe hacienda house. There, we offer the student *cuy* [guinea pig]—the guys love it. Sometimes we take the student's friends along, too." —Patricia

> "Some weekends, we go to Yunguilla where we have a small house. The students from this school almost never go, because they have their excursions to Ingapirca, Vilcabamba, Jima, and so on." —Blanca

> "On Saturdays, students generally have excursions. That is the day that I spend with my extended family, so students do not get to go with me. But if a student does not have an excursion, he or she goes with me and has lunch with my family." —Flor

> "On Sundays, we go to our property in Paute. We take the students along so that they feel comfortable and part of the family. On Saturdays, students generally are not at home, because they have excursions or they hang out with friends." —Pía

As these host parents have suggested above, students have busy lives. A day in the life of a typical student[65] begins by waking up early and eating breakfast quickly before rushing off to school for class at 08:00. After four hours of class, split by a half-hour break, students return home for lunch with their families. Following lunch, students may chat with their families or rest briefly before returning to school for the afternoon extracurricular activity. Sometimes, students return to school early so that

65 This overview of a typical student's day draws on my fieldwork observations, as well as on my own experience as a student and my years as an education abroad professional in Cuenca.

they have time to stop by the computer lab and check their e-mail; others log on after the afternoon extracurricular activity. Students may also remain at school to do their homework for the following day, especially if they need to use a computer to prepare an assignment.

As the sun sets,[66] students head home for supper. Some nights, however, students remain in the city center to go out to a bar or club. For example, Wednesday evenings, students head to Eucalyptus, an international *tapas* bar, for Ladies' Night. Other nights have a predictable hangout as well. Vicente, an experienced host father, gave me a rundown of students' weekly nightlife:

> Sometimes they go out several nights a week. What is the typical behavior? Wednesday, Eucalyptus; Thursday, Wunderbar; Friday, La Mesa; Saturday, El Cafecito.

Elsa, a host mother for several years, lamented that students do not spend much time with their host families, and she seemed critical of the school:

> On an ordinary day, there is not much to tell about. And on weekends, there are school excursions, so there is no way to spend much time with them then either ... they spend more time at the school than with the family ... in general, students have a lot of homework, so they do not take part in many family activities ... I encourage them to get more involved, but it just does not happen. I believe that students feel more

66 Three degrees south of the Equator, the sun sets at approximately 18:00 (and rises like clockwork around 06:00) throughout the entire year.

> comfortable in their free time hanging out with the group. They go to the movies or to a bar with their friends from the group.

In contrast to Josefina's acquaintances who appeared relieved that students do not spend much time with the family, Elsa clearly would like to interact more with students. Felipe, a young man whose family has hosted for nearly a decade, also remarked that students have busy schedules and concluded, "with them [students], what we can share is the weekend or evenings." But his mother, Piedad, quickly corrected him: "Evenings, not really, because they have homework. It is really just the weekend." As these hosts suggest, to a certain degree, schools monopolize students' time with classes, extracurricular instruction, and field trips. But at the same time, schools suggest that their professors assign discussion questions to encourage interaction between students and host families.

While many of the students whom I observed seemed to spend more time with each other than with their host families (just as Elsa suggested above), some made a more conscious effort to interact with their families. For example, Todd, a student from a small liberal arts college in the midwestern United States, contrasted his two study abroad experiences:

> I am more into family life here than I was with the other program that traveled around. Sometimes I just prefer to spend time with my family than with the group.

Stacy, a student from the same college, also preferred to spend time with her host family instead of going out with classmates:

> My family gives me a hard time every Wednesday because I have not gone to Eucalyptus for Ladies' Night. For them, it's a huge sin that I don't go out. But I want to spend time with my family. They are amazed that I do not dance, drink, or party.

Stacy's remark suggests that, based on their previous hosting experience, her host family has developed certain ideas about what students are like and what to expect from them. Her host parents expect her to act in a certain way that is acceptable only because of her status as a foreigner (Van Broeck 2001). They would not permit their own children to go out during the week.

Two common themes emerge from this discussion: students do not spend much time with their host families (especially during the week), and weekday interactions with students center around mealtime. This would suggest that the host-guest encounter in education abroad sometimes can be superficial, as often is the case in tourism (Chambers 2000). Nevertheless, some degree of acculturation may be possible. As I noted in the literature review, Brunt and Courtney (1999:509) found that meaningful conversation between villagers and tourists was not required; the mere presence of outsiders led to attitudinal changes in locals.

The reality that students and host families often do not spend much time together is something that I observed firsthand while visiting a couple of the schools. Students typically have class for four hours each day, and extracurricular activities such as dance classes, lectures, volunteering, and field trips occupy their time as well. In addition, as several *señoras* commented above, school programming even extends into the weekend, when students often have excursions to nearby sites of natural and historical interest. Great effort, therefore, may be required on the part of both host families and students to take advantage of the limited time they share together.

Gracias a Dios[67]

Whenever humans interact with each other, especially when they are from different cultures, there is the potential for conflict to develop. Conflict can result when one person's behavior does not correlate with what another person expects or considers acceptable (Adler 1975; Chambers 2000; Lea 1998; Waldren 1997). As some tourism scholars have documented, this conflict may manifest itself in the form of hosts' negative perceptions of their guests (Chambers 2000).

67 "Thank God"

From my experience as an education abroad professional in Cuenca, I dealt with a variety of problems involving the host-guest encounter. Some of those problems included students staying out later than expected, or occasionally not returning home at all. Others involved missing money or possessions. As well, there were a few complaints from families who were concerned about their host students drinking too much, especially on weeknights. With this in mind, I expected to get an earful when I asked host families about problems or bad experiences with students. This did happen a few times, but some *señoras* denied that they had experienced problems:

> "No, *gracias a Dios* [thank God], so far no problems. They have all been respectful." —Sofia

> "I have received such good girls. They have been like a gift. I have been lucky, because I have heard about problems with students from other *señoras*, but I have not had any problems." —Blanca

As Sumka (2000:29) suggests, some families may have downplayed problems and recounted only positive experiences out of concern that acknowledging problems might jeopardize their opportunity to host again in the future. In fact, Vicente confided to me that he believed some families were concerned only about the money they received and so would consequently ignore problems that arose. In addition, as I noted in

Chapter 3, some families seemed to see me, at least initially, as an official envoy of the schools, which could have affected their responses. I am more inclined to think, however, that the tendency toward positive responses may have been due to host families' experiences with previous students and their growing acceptance of student behavior that young Cuencans could not get away with (see Van Broeck 2001). This shift in host attitudes toward acceptable student behavior is evidence of a sociocultural impact of hosting on families.

Some *señoras*, such as Alexandra, acknowledged that they had experienced minor problems with students but said that others had it worse:

> I think I have been very lucky. When I was with another school, I heard about some problems ... I have had two or three problems, but they were not very serious. Most have been very good experiences.

Toward the end of my interview with Elsa—when we had established a good level of rapport—she mentioned a topic that I had not expected, but one that obviously bothered her a lot:

> A lot of times, students say that they want everything to be tidy, but they are not neat—neither the girls nor the boys. Just one, a boy, was neat. His room was impeccable; he did everything perfectly. It was a pleasure to see.

> But the table manners are bad; they eat in a terrible way. The school should give a talk to the students about what the family does at the table. They make a lot of noise when they eat. For example, when the soup is hot, they blow on it. *They come from a culture that supposedly is superior, so they should teach us, but it is exactly the opposite.* It is terrible; I just want to die. First, one should observe what the family does. If they do not blow [on hot food], one should not blow. If they do not talk with food in their mouths, one should not talk with food in the mouth.

Elsa's remark about superiority suggests that her hosting experience has instilled in her a greater appreciation for her own culture.

Having discovered a potentially interesting topic (i.e., manners), I began asking other *señoras* about this as well. Most indicated to me that they had not noticed poor table manners, although a few expressed minor irritation that students do not always greet family members the way that Cuencans do. The custom is to greet each person individually, either by brushing cheeks and making a kissing sound in the air (between two women or a man and a woman) or by shaking hands (between two men). Instead, students often walk in the door and shout a collective greeting, or they proceed directly to their rooms without greeting anyone at all.

But when I asked Julieta if she had noticed poor manners, the words poured from her mouth:

> That is definitely true. Many of us families have commented about that. There are very few [students] who have good manners. Most come in without saying hello; they were not

> brought up right. They have bad habits in the the bathroom, too. There are very few students who do things the way we do.
>
> There was one exceptional student—an exaggerated case. He had a very good character, but it was as if he had come from the forest. Once, we were eating *caldo de patas* [pig's foot soup], and when I told him what he was eating, he took it out of his mouth and threw it on the table. His manners were so terrible that I did not want my children to be at the table with him. I had to invent reasons why they were never able to eat with him. I accompanied him, of course, but I avoided looking at him.
>
> I do not know, but I think that rural peasants from Ecuador, who have no culture at all, would have a much different way of acting. In Ecuador, we spend more time with our children, so we can teach them good manners.

As with Elsa, Julieta's remarks suggest that she has developed greater appreciation for her own culture—and perhaps even for indigenous members of Ecuadorian society—as a result of hosting students.

Others also expressed irritation with students' table manners:

> "I do not like the way they [students] eat—for example, the way they grab a fork or a spoon, as if it were some tool. It is a really disagreeable form and shows a lack of culture, of manners. And some students do not close their mouths when they chew. My younger daughter is a monkey; she copies everything." —Vicente

> "One boy would grab his soup bowl and [gestured that he lifted it to his mouth and slurped]. And this one girl would leave a bit of food on her plate and then tell me that I could eat it if I wanted. There was also another boy who used to slurp his soup quite loudly." —Ruth

These host parents clearly expect students to behave the same as Cuencans, at least with respect to table manners. This would suggest that hosts do not always hold guests to a separate (lower) standard, unlike the case that Van Broeck (2001) reported in Turkey. Some host mothers, such as Pía, seemed more laid back about manners:

> I have not noticed any problems with bad table manners. Of course, sometimes we laugh at the table and play games. Sometimes, too much etiquette at the table is bad.

So, while there are differences in manners between host families and students, it would appear that there is some degree of variation in terms of what is deemed acceptable. At the same time, the question of manners demonstrates that Cuencans' identity is strengthened through perceived superiority to their seemingly uncultured guests (Chambers 2000; Kohn 1997; Waldren 1997).

Those familiar with Ecuador (and Ecuadorians themselves) generally acknowledge that the country has an inferiority complex, especially with respect to the United States. Early in my fieldwork, I

interviewed Francisco, a local professor and historian, and I asked him about the notion of cultural inferiority. He explained that

> there is a tendency to see that which is Ecuadorian as inferior to that which is foreign. For example, people see the superiority of technology from the United States (and elsewhere), and that creates a feeling of insecurity. There is also familiarity with US culture and a sense of its cultural superiority.

Miles (2004) noted that this inferiority complex extends to Ecuadorians' view of Colombia as well, which they also see as culturally and technologically superior. One need only peruse store shelves in Ecuador to notice that many goods boast that they were produced in Colombia. Implicit in these labels is the superiority of the goods due to their Colombian origin. As well, although the Universidad de Cuenca has a well-respected medical school, a common sight on the city's streets are signs outside doctors' offices announcing that the physician was trained in Cuba or the United States. In light of this inferiority complex, the notion that hosting students can strengthen Cuencans' identity suggests an important, and beneficial, sociocultural impact on families.

The importance of family is another factor that seems to strengthen Cuencans' identity. In Cuenca, family is expected to take precedence over friends and personal ambition (Miles 2004). Carmen pointed out that in spite of many cultural changes due to interconnections with other places,

the importance of family remains an important characteristic of Cuencan culture:

> We have evolved a bit. Now we accept more things. Before, we were more closed. There has been so much communication. So many people have left and returned with different ideas ... [but] in spite of all the changes, the family remains important.

Indeed, families in Ecuador—and especially in Cuenca—remain close-knit, as I observed with both my host family and my in-laws.[68]

Julieta theorized about the differences between families in Ecuador and the United States, suggesting that the students she hosts receive something in Cuenca that they lack at home:

> We dedicate ourselves to teaching our children. We have a lot of time to teach. I think that students do not receive much affection from their parents, but they do receive it in Cuenca.

Esperanza echoed this cultural difference:

> One girl told me that it seemed strange to her that someone would dedicate so much time to the family. They tell us that they leave home early and go to college. The family relationship is a central theme of our discussions—what it is like there and here.

68 Handelsman 2000:39 has also noted the perseverance of the close-knit family in Ecuador. In addition, Stephenson (1999:21) reports that this is also the case in Chile.

Julieta and Esperanza are alluding to the notion of *gringos* as "cold" people. We saw this notion earlier as a motivation for hosting, but in the context of these remarks, the implicit perceived "coldness" of US family structure is evidence that the unity of Cuencan families is considered to be superior. Notably, Stephenson observed this with host families in Chile:

> The aspect of Chilean culture most frequently mentioned as positive was the nature of the Chilean family. The hosts considered that in this area Chile definitely was stronger than the United States, which they considered to be 'cold' and 'too independent.' [1999:20]

Moreover, some of her respondents suggested that Chilean host families offered more *cariño* (affection) than students received from their own families in the US (Stephenson 1999:20-21). This is precisely the same sentiment about which Julieta theorizes above.

Vicente also noted the importance of family but suggested that there have been some recent changes:

> Cuencan families are very close. Cuenca is a very peculiar city in that regard. This draws foreign students' attention, because in their country there is not the interest for others that there is here.

> But the concept of family in Cuenca has changed with the wave of tourism during the last 10 years. For example, there is more freedom now. Young people see the freedom that

> foreigners have, and it has prompted them to want the same thing.

As can be seen in the preceding discussion, an important sociocultural impact of hosting students is that families often develop a greater appreciation of their own culture. Stephenson suggested that for Chilean host families,

> the most significant result of hosting a US student upon the host families appears to have been in reaffirming their own sense of being Chilean and in gaining a deeper appreciation of their own culture. [1999:35]

In the context of host families in Cuenca, this stems from three factors. First, as students talk about other parts of Ecuador that they have visited, host families begin to realize that their country is rich in cultural diversity. Given Ecuador's inferiority complex, the fact that foreign students are interested in learning about the culture has a tendency to foster in host families a greater appreciation of their own culture. Second, greater appreciation can also develop in reaction to students' manners (especially at mealtime or with greetings), which often are incongruous with what families consider to be acceptable behavior according to their own cultural norms. As a result, families suddenly see their own culture as superior to that of their guests. Finally, some host families talked about the differences in family life between Ecuador and the United States. To

explain why students seem to get so attached to their hosts, several host parents theorized that students receive something in Cuenca that they do not receive at home: love and affection from the family. While some host parents admired the fact that students are more independent than their own children, they also saw greater family unity in Cuenca as a strength of their own culture.[69]

While there is evidence that hosting has some minor sociocultural impacts on families (not to mention economic impacts), the effect on children seems to be much greater. Several host mothers remarked that hosting represented an opportunity for their children to learn about other cultures and to learn to share with other people. Vicente reported that hosting has had a significant sociocultural impact on his university-age daughter, who grew up with foreign students as household guests. As he noted, by sharing her home with students, she learned that "there are other alternatives, other possibilities in the world." Vicente also declared that his daughter knows both worlds (i.e., the local and the foreign) and that this openness was the best inheritance that they could have given her. Had there been more time, I would have liked to have interviewed the daughter to get her perspective of the experience.

In addition, Daniel, a young man whose family has hosted for a few years, suggested that the sociocultural impact was probably greater for his

69 Chilean families reported this as well (Stephenson 1999:21).

sister than for him. He based his suggestion on the fact that, in general, males in Cuenca have more freedom than females, so she would be more impressed by the level of independence that female students exhibit than would he. Vicente also addressed this subject and said that young Cuencans observe the freedom that foreigners have, and they then want the same independence for themselves, a demand that often is opposed by their parents. As often is the case, sociocultural change eventually occurs in this younger generation, especially in terms of attitudes and ideas.

Finally, Tatiana, a young host mother, provided another example of the impact on children. Her young daughter was extremely timid, but having guests in the home and learning to share and to interact with these strangers has helped her to break out of her shell. I would have liked to have learned from the daughter what she thought about her family's stream of guests, but I did not have Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to include minors as research participants. If I were to conduct this research again, I would seek IRB approval to include minors because, as I suggested above, the greatest sociocultural impact seems to be on children.

At this point, it would be useful to review the impacts of hosting on families. First, there is a presumed—and real—economic impact derived from hosting students from language schools and education abroad programs. Even for families that host just one or two students each year,

the income helps in meeting expenses. On the other hand, there is no such economic impact for hosting a high school student for an academic year through one particular exchange program, since those host families receive no monetary compensation. For those host families, the benefits are primarily sociocultural (e.g., increased prestige or social status). There is, however, a benefit for which an economic value could be determined: the opportunity for a family to send one of its own children abroad, where that child would receive room and board from a host family. Only about 60 percent of host families in Cuenca and vicinity actually take advantage of this opportunity; for the remaining 40 percent, hosting a student incurs a real cost for which there is no return.

I also discussed numerous sociocultural impacts on families from hosting students. As Table 1 indicates, some of these impacts are temporary in nature, lasting only for an initial period of adjustment or throughout the entire duration of a student's stay, while others are more long-term in nature. In addition, as we saw above, several impacts affect children in particular. A child may become jealous of a student in the home, perhaps due to the student receiving special treatment (e.g., not having to do household chores) or because the child has had to relinquish his room to the student. Although only five of the 27 items listed in Table 1 specifically mention children, many other impacts affect children as well. Children, especially young ones, are impressionable, so there is great

potential for them to be impacted by the hosting experience in ways that their parents are not.

Sociocultural Impacts	***Temporary Sociocultural Impacts***
Developing fictive kinship ties or becoming attached to students	Jealousy toward students on the part of host siblings
Learning English	Spending more time together as a family
Children becoming more responsible by emulating student behavior	Avoiding arguments to present a good impression
Children adopting more direct way of dealing with conflict	Speaking more slowly or using simpler vocabulary
Hearing outsider's impression of one's own culture	Serving holiday foods at other times of the year
Learning about the world, other cultures	Changing family's diet to accommodate student
Becoming more open-minded toward new ideas and attitudes	Changing daily routine (especially breaking the monotony of daily life)
Children learning to share with others	
Desire to travel to other countries	
Learning to play card games	
Learning to cook vegetarian food	
Learning recipes from guest's country	
Learning to eat new foods (e.g., pizza)	
Celebrating holidays from guest's country (e.g., Thanksgiving)	
Children becoming more independent	
Breaking down stereotypes (e.g., *gringos* as cold people)	
Increased social status or prestige	
Changing views of women	
Greater acceptance of persons with disabilities	
Greater acceptance of other races	

Table 1: Sociocultural impacts on families from hosting students. Some impacts last only for an initial period of adjustment or for the duration of a student's stay, while others are more long-term impacts.

In this section, we saw that host families, like students, experience apprehension prior to a new encounter. As host families suggested, this fear often is unfounded, as the encounter generally occurs without any serious problems. We also saw that students generally do not spend much time with their host families, especially during the week. This would suggest that the host-guest encounter is sometimes more superficial than might be expected in cultural tourism. Finally, I discussed how hosting students can cultivate in families a greater appreciation of their own culture. I noted that this stems from three factors: (1) host families become "tourists" of their own culture (Esman 1984) as students talk about Ecuador's cultural diversity, (2) families react to students' poor manners, which they see as inferior to their own, and (3) Cuencans see the importance of family, and the apparent lack thereof in the US, as evidence that their own culture is superior.

Summary

In this chapter, qualitative data—and some quantitative data as well—have shown that host families are well-educated, middle-class families who reside in neighborhoods that language school personnel generally

consider to be safe and picturesque. The selection of these families to be hosts demonstrates the language schools' concern for students' welfare and their desire for students to receive a positive impression of Cuenca. As I noted in the section on motivations, the decision to start hosting students involves a complex interplay of many factors, including social connections to other hosts, an interest in cross-cultural exchange, and the pragmatism of economic survival. Implicit in the decision is the prestige or increased social status that families can obtain through their association with foreign students. Additionally, although families did not state that fictive kinship was a motivation for hosting students, we saw that it can be an implicit motivation.

In terms of the host-guest encounter, we saw that students often do not spend much time with their host families on weekdays because of school commitments, which usually include morning language classes and afternoon extracurricular instruction or field trips. Host families reported that their weekday interactions with students often are limited to mealtime conversations about culture, which afford an opportunity for mutual learning, but that language can be a hindrance (especially for beginning and lower intermediate students).

Weekends offer more opportunities for interaction, but even then, students often have school-related excursions that preclude their participation in family activities and social functions. Some families

suggested that schools monopolize too much of students' time and that scheduling fewer activities, especially on the weekend, would allow students to spend more time with them.

As we saw in this chapter, hosting students appears to have a sociocultural impact on families, and especially on children. This evidence would support acculturation and tourism studies that have shown that cross-cultural encounters result in outcomes for both guests and hosts. Moreover, it confirms that Bochner et al. (1979) were correct to question the implicit assumption in the education abroad literature that host growth or development neither occurs nor should be expected. Indeed, as I have shown in this chapter—and as Stephenson (1999) and Sumka (2001) demonstrated in their work as well—hosting students does appear to impact host families in positive (and, potentially, also negative) ways.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary of the Findings

This thesis has explored the motivations that prompt families in Cuenca, Ecuador, to host foreign students—as explained primarily by the notion of fictive kinship and also by economic incentive—as well as the interaction of these host families and students, framed in terms of the host-guest encounter from anthropological studies of tourism. Through these frameworks, I have examined the host-guest encounter in education abroad, specifically, from the perspective of host families, in order to learn whether—and, if so, how—education abroad programs impact hosts. In this chapter, I summarize the findings of that inquiry, discuss the lessons and limitations of my study, and suggest directions for further research.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 2, the education abroad literature on outcomes has focused almost exclusively on students. These studies have shown that students benefit academically and personally from the

education abroad experience. But do host families benefit as well? What do they receive from the experience? As I noted, concern for hosts was seemingly absent from the literature until the late 1970s when Bochner et al. (1979) attempted to correct this omission. In contrast to what the researchers termed an implicit assumption in the literature that host growth or development is neither assumed nor expected, they concluded that host country students participating in a multicultural program did, in fact, experience some degree of growth—which they termed "international mindedness"—from interacting with students from other cultures (Bochner et al. 1979). However, as I noted previously, they questioned whether the multicultural program could actually claim credit for that growth or whether it was simply reinforcing the students' predisposition for international mindedness.

Twenty years later, Skye Stephenson, who was serving as resident director for CIEE's[70] program in Santiago, Chile, renewed the field's interest in host impacts (see Stephenson 1999). As I noted previously, Stephenson appears to be the first to have examined impacts specifically on host families (her study also examined impacts on US students and Chilean university professors). Stephenson found that Chilean families experienced a transformation from hosting students, most notably "in

70 Council on International Educational Exchange. Stephenson is now the Director of Latin American and Caribbean Studies at the School for International Training.

reaffirming their own sense of being Chilean and in gaining a deeper appreciation of their own culture" (1999:35).

Shoshanna Sumka, who was a graduate student in applied anthropology at the University of Maryland, followed up Stephenson's work with her own study of host families in Quito, Ecuador (see Sumka 2000 and 2001). Sumka noted three general areas of impact, including that "host families take greater pride in their culture" (2001), thus confirming Stephenson's primary conclusion. Additionally, she observed that the presence of a student changes family dynamics, in that they may spend more time together, or siblings may avoid fighting with each other (Sumka 2001). Finally, host families demonstrated what Sumka (2001) called "hospitality concerns"—that is, concern for the student's comfort, safety, and well-being.

Stephenson's and Sumka's works represent a significant contribution to the study of host impacts in education abroad, and nearly the entire extent of research specifically on host families. This dearth of information on host impacts required that I first gather a substantial amount of qualitative data to better understand the host-guest encounter from the perspective of host families. To that end, my research questions asked who host families are, what motivates them to host foreign students, what happens in the host-guest encounter, what families perceive to be the impacts on them from hosting, and whether the encounter ameliorates or

perpetuates intercultural misunderstanding. These questions, and thus the framework for my research and analysis, emanated from anthropological studies of tourism, which also draw on acculturation theory.

As I explained in Chapter 2, tourism and acculturation studies have demonstrated that when two cultural groups meet, there is a mutual sociocultural impact.[71] Additionally, as I mentioned above, the few previous studies related to host families (i.e., Stephenson 1999; Sumka 2001) reported that families in Santiago and Quito, two large capital cities, experienced such an impact from hosting students. With this in mind, I certainly felt pressure—and, indeed, expected—to find sociocultural impacts on families in a smaller city, Cuenca, as well (and the more dramatic the impacts, the better). In the process of writing this thesis, I—like Ogra (1999:169)—have questioned whether such expectations going into my fieldwork might have influenced my findings. Moreover, when I first proposed this thesis, I was an employee of one of the language schools in Cuenca,[72] so I brought that experience, along with the biases thereto appertaining, to this project.

71 Additionally, there may also be economic and environmental impacts on hosts.

72 Prior to actually starting my fieldwork, I resigned from my position so that I could focus on my research and also so that I would not be seen as an official representative of the school when I interviewed host families. In addition, this allowed me to interview key personnel from other schools, to whom I might not have otherwise had access.

However, in retrospect, I realize that I was somewhat cognizant of these concerns during the research process itself, which helped me to remain cautious and objective as I conducted my fieldwork and later analyzed the data. The findings below reflect that objectivity, as they are based on a careful analysis of my interview transcriptions and other data I collected. Moreover, I am cautious to portray the sociocultural impacts only for what they are. Simply stated, they are minor, but nevertheless informative, effects that demonstrate that education abroad does, in fact, have an impact on host families (and especially on the children of those families). I will discuss these impacts in more detail below.

While I remained objective during my fieldwork, the experience also was somewhat transformative. As I interviewed more and more host families, my view of them changed: initially, I saw them as working *for* a language school or program, a view that was influenced by my work as an education abroad professional. To use a business analogy, I saw host families as sub-contractors who provided a service (i.e., room, board, language and cultural laboratory, etc.) to contractors (i.e., schools and programs), which sold a product (i.e., language and cultural immersion) to its customers (i.e., students). Or, to paraphrase (neo-)Marxian ideas, schools are the capitalists who control the means of production and thus can exploit their laborers (i.e., host families; see Wolf [1982] for a discussion of modes of production). After all, as I pointed out in Chapter

4, schools determine which families receive students and how often, as well as what should be provided and for what price.

As I got to know the host families during the interviews, I came to see them as *collaborators* who work *with* schools; and, to a certain degree, I assumed an advocacy role on their behalf. Several families seemed to suggest—if not outright demand—that they wanted the schools to see them more as partners and to consider their feedback. Specifically, they suggested several areas that they felt needed to be addressed: school communications with families, school policies, (lack of) support for families, and student orientation. Some families also had specific recommendations about how schools could improve, such as creating an independent committee of host parents to help promote programs and ensure genuine cultural exchange, to provide mutual support among host families, and to serve as an advisory board. I compiled these issues and recommendations and then added my own analysis and suggestions, informed by my professional experience in the field of education abroad, to produce written reports that I provided to the two schools that were most involved in facilitating my research.

What we have learned in this thesis is that host families in Cuenca are middle class families with an interest in cultural exchange and a need to supplement their incomes. Although these motivations may seem to be mutually exclusive, for many families they peacefully co-exist. Earlier, I

proposed fictive kinship as a framework for understanding families' motivations to host and for examining what they receive from the experience. After all, families welcome students into their homes and whether or not kinship terms are used, schools encourage these hosts to integrate their guests into the family's daily life. However, as I also suggested, fictive kinship is not a perfect framework for my research. While students often are referred to as sons and daughters (and as brothers and sisters by their host siblings), in other ways they are treated more like guests than as immediate family members. For example, students are not expected to perform household chores, unlike their host siblings (especially host sisters), although they sometimes offer to help. As Pilar, a homestay coordinator, told us in Chapter 4, from the perspective of language schools and programs, students are there to be *served*, since they are *paying* for the experience. This kind of economic exchange makes students more like (cultural) tourists than fictive kin. Moreover, the economic exchange effectively commodifies Cuencan culture, which is "sold" just like any other product.

In addition, fictive kinship is problematic because host parents frequently grant more independence to students than they would to their own children (especially to their daughters). Some remarked that they admired the greater independence of US students; however, they also considered such independence to be a sign that US culture was inferior to

Ecuadorian culture, at least in terms of the importance placed on family. That is, whereas Ecuadorians consider family to be more important than anything else, they have learned from students' comments that in the US, family is not always the top priority. This conflicts with Ecuadorians' sense of what is important and leads them to believe that, although the US may possess advanced technology and other signs of superiority, Ecuador is superior with respect to what really matters: family.

Several host families expressed this belief of Ecuadorian superiority through the notion that *gringos* are "cold" people. They are not alone in this belief, as Chilean host families also saw *gringos* as "cold" (Stephenson 1999). As I demonstrated in Chapter 4, several host families held this stereotype prior to hosting, but their interactions with students showed them that this idea was inaccurate. Host families remarked that the students whom they had hosted were not "cold" at all—they laughed, danced, became attached to their hosts, and cried when it was time to depart. At the same time, some host mothers theorized that this "warmness" was a result of students receiving something in Cuenca that they did not receive at home: love and affection (*cariño*). In short, while hosting seems to break the stereotype that *gringos* are "cold" people, it does so only partially. Several host families seemed to suggest that *students* may not be "cold" people, but their families back home are.

While most host families reminisced about the bonds that they have developed with students, many of them had a difficult time recollecting the names of all the students they have hosted. A few remembered every student and were able to recite all the names. Most, however, remembered only some of the students. As might be expected, strong, enduring bonds between students and host families develop only some of the time. Indeed, as Galo acknowledged, while his family became quite close to Mary, the first student it hosted, similar bonds did not develop with the two or three other students they hosted afterwards. Likewise, my own host family and I have remained close (albeit somewhat sporadically at times), although I am not aware that it has maintained such ties with other students it hosted.

As I suggested in Chapter 4, we can use a specific form of Latin American fictive kinship, *compadrazgo*, to examine the motivations of families to host students, as well as the encounter of these hosts and guests. Framed in these terms, students are "initiates" and host families are "sponsors." However, in contrast to *compadrazgo*, hosting is an economic exchange in which the "sponsor" receives financial compensation. In *compadrazgo*, especially in situations where the parents are poor, sponsors may be chosen on the basis of their superior social and economic status. Such selection is made with the expectation

that the sponsor(s) will be a source of financial assistance, not only for the initiate but also—and, perhaps, especially—for the parents.

This economic aspect of hosting cannot be ignored. While hosting students offers families an opportunity for cultural exchange, it also provides them with needed income to supplement the family budget. In general, host families emphasized that, for them, hosting is primarily about new experiences—that is, meeting new people from other cultures, learning about those cultures, and sharing their own culture with their guests. They also insisted that hosting is not about the money, yet most acknowledged that it certainly benefits them financially. Indeed, some families were quite open about admitting that the need for additional income was what prompted them to consider hosting. In summary, these findings lead me to hypothesize that, regardless of financial need, families who are not truly interested in cultural exchange will tend to seek economic survival strategies other than hosting students. Finally, although I have focused above on host families as a whole—and, to a lesser degree, on host parents—children are the ones for whom there is the greatest potential for sociocultural impact.

Suggestions for Further Research

This thesis has only begun to discover the lives of host families in Cuenca. While I cannot conclude that there are—or are not—definite, observable changes in Cuencan culture due to the presence of education abroad students, my ethnographic analysis shows that some host families *perceive* that they have experienced one or more sociocultural impacts (albeit generally minor ones). Moreover, as I have suggested, there is tremendous potential for hosting to have profound sociocultural impacts on children. To what extent these sociocultural impacts may have spread to other members of the community (i.e., to non-host families) is beyond the scope of my thesis. Nevertheless, in documenting evidence of perceived changes, this thesis lays the groundwork for other scholars to study the acculturative effects of education abroad on the community as a whole. Such research would need to take into account, and isolate, a variety of globalization and modernization factors such as transnational migration, mass tourism, and the Internet, which may also contribute to culture change. Smith (2003:55) lists several indicators that could facilitate isolating these factors, such as the ratio of guests to locals, the nature of host-guest interaction, local perceptions, degree of usage of local products, changes in family relationships and the role of women, etc. In short, if education abroad does, in fact, lead to culture change in receiving communities, like tourism, it is but one of many agents of change.

Specifically, such a study would need to develop a cultural trait inventory (or perhaps adopt the Intercultural Development Inventory) to be administered to both host and non-host families in Cuenca. The inventory would need to include one set of traits that are characteristic of traditional Cuencan culture and another set that would be characteristic of US culture. In addition, the inventory would need to be accompanied by additional survey questions that would allow researchers to isolate other agents of change (e.g., transnational migration). By comparing responses between the two groups, it then would be possible to determine whether the groups are similar or different. Such a determination would, however, reflect merely a correlation between particular traits and status as a host or non-host. To determine whether (or how) hosting leads to families adopting particular foreign cultural traits, it would be necessary to study new families from the time that they apply to become hosts, through hosting their first student, to post-departure follow-up. As well, a longitudinal analysis of the children of these new host families would be informative in learning how hosting fosters intercultural development.

Finally, the question of motivation for hosting is an area that is ripe for a more in-depth analysis. I have suggested that hosting is an economic survival strategy for at least some families. Further research is needed to explore how that decision is made, and what role, if any, being associated with *gringos* (i.e., the potential for increased social prestige) plays in

favoring hosting over other economic survival strategies such as transnational migration or entrepreneurship.

Research in this area could include a questionnaire based on the responses Stephenson (1999) elicited from host families in Chile using an open-answer format. Host families could be asked to indicate what they felt were the three greatest advantages of hosting students from the following list: cultural, social, economic, family, or other (see Stephenson 1999:18). Likewise, researchers should also ask families to indicate the three greatest disadvantages from a predetermined list: extra work/responsibility, loss of privacy/independence, cultural differences, worry, food issue, telephone, not meeting contract, and other (see Stephenson 1999:19).

Finally, as Stephenson (1999:22) did, the questionnaire could ask families to indicate the area(s) in which they have noticed a personal change attributable to, or influenced by, hosting a student. These areas might include such items as feeling a part of opening [host country] to the world, increased appreciation of [host country] national identity, image of the other, professional expectations of the family, political opinion, change in views of class, change in view of gender roles, and change in views of race (adapted from Stephenson 1999:22). If researchers were to administer such a questionnaire to both current and former host families, they could address the questions of why families decide to host (and what

they expect to receive), as well as why some families decide to stop hosting.

References Cited

Aalberts, Robert, and Gary Rhodes
1997 Legal Issues. *In* NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators. William Hoffa and John Pearson, eds. Pp. 351-367. Washington, DC: NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Adler, Peter
1975 The Transitional Experience: An Alternative View of Culture Shock. Journal of Humanistic Psychology 15:13-23.

Aramberri, Julio
2005 The Host Should Get Lost: Paradigms in the Tourism Theory. Annals of Tourism Research 28:738-761.

Association of American Colleges
1960 Academic Programs Abroad: An Exploration of Their Assets and Liabilities. New York: Institute of International Education.

Besculides, Antonia, Martha E. Lee, and Peter J. McCormick
2002 Residents' Perceptions of the Cultural Benefits of Tourism. Annals of Tourism Research 29:303-319.

Bochner, Stephen, Anli Lin, and Beverly M. McLeod
1979 Cross-Cultural Contact and the Development of an International Perspective. Journal of Social Psychology 107:29-41.

Bolen, Mell
2001 Consumerism and U.S. Study Abroad. Journal of Studies in International Education 5(3):182-200.

Boorstin, Daniel J.
1961 The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America. New York: Atheneum.

Bourdieu, Pierre
2002 The Forms of Capital. *In* Readings in Economic Sociology. Nicole Woolsey Biggart, ed. Pp. 280-291. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Bowman, John E.
1987 Educating American Undergraduates Abroad. Occasional Paper on International Educational Exchange 24. New York: Council on International Educational Exchange.

Brown, Frances
1998 Tourism Reassessed: Blight or Blessing? Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

Brunt, Paul, and Paul Courtney
1999 Host Perceptions of Sociocultural Impacts. Annals of Tourism Research 26:493-515.

Carlson, Jerry S., and Keith F. Widaman
1988 The Effects of Study Abroad During College on Attitudes Toward Other Cultures. International Journal of Intercultural Relations 12:1-17.

Carter, William D.
1973 Study Abroad and Educational Development. Paris: UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.

Causey, Andrew
2003 Hard Bargaining in Sumatra: Western Travelers and Toba Bataks in the Marketplace of Souvenirs. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Chambers, Erve
2000 Native Tours: The Anthropology of Travel and Tourism. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
2005 Can the Anthropology of Tourism Make Us Better Travelers? NAPA Bulletin 23:27-44.

Clemmer, Richard O.

1972 Truth, Duty, and the Revitalization of Anthropologists: A New Perspective on Cultural Change and Resistance. *In* Reinventing Anthropology. Dell H. Hymes, ed. Pp. 213-247. New York: Pantheon.

Cohen, Erik
1979 A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences. Sociology 13:179-201.

Collins, L. R.
1978 Review of Hosts and Guests: An Anthropology of Tourism. Annals of Tourism Research 5:278-280.

Comp, David
2003 Research of U.S. Students Abroad: An Update, Volume III, 2001-2003, with Updates to the 1989 and Volume II Editions 2000-2003. Electronic resource, http://www.globaled.us/ro/book_research_comp.html, accessed 29 October 2005.

Cuenca, Ilustre Municipalidad de
1999 Complement to the Proposal for the Inscription of the Historic Center of Cuenca Ecuador in the World Heritage List. Cuenca: Ilustre Municipalidad de Cuenca, Dirección de Avalúos, Catastros y Estadísticas.

Dann, Graham M. S.
1996 The Language of Tourism: A Sociological Perspective. Wallingford, Oxon, United Kingdom: CAB International.
2005 The Theoretical State of the Art in the Sociology and Anthropology of Tourism. Tourism Analysis 10:3-15.

Dávila, Mario
1971 Compadrazgo: Fictive Kinship in Latin America. *In* Readings in Kinship and Social Structure. Nelson Graburn, ed. Pp. 396-406. New York: Harper and Row.

de Kadt, Emanuel, ed.
1979 Tourism: Passport to Development? Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Durbin, Richard J.
2006 The Lincoln Commission and the Future of Study Abroad. International Educator 15(1):4-6.

Dwyer, Mary M.

2004 More Is Better: The Impact of Study Abroad Program Duration. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad 10:151-163.

Dwyer, Mary M., and Courtney Peters
2004 The Benefits of Study Abroad: New Study Confirms Significant Gains. Transitions Abroad 27(5).

Ebaugh, Helen Rose, and Mary Curry
2000 Fictive Kin as Social Capital in New Immigrant Communities. Sociological Perspectives 43(2):189-209.

Ehlers, Tracy Bachrach
1991 Debunking Marianismo: Economic Vulnerability and Survival Strategies Among Guatemalan Wives. Ethnology 30(1):1-16.

El Comercio
2005 Los 'gringos' se integran a la familia cuencana. El Comercio (Quito), 19 June.

Esman, Marjorie R.
1984 Tourism as Ethnic Preservation: The Cajuns of Louisiana. Annals of Tourism Research 11:451-467.

Espinoza, Leonardo
2001 Cuenca: sus tres improntas culturales. *In* Cuenca, patrimonio cultural de la humanidad. Pp. 39-54. Cuenca: Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, Núcleo del Azuay.

Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn
2003 Informed Consent in Anthropological Research: We Are Not Exempt. *In* Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, ed. Pp. 159-177. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Forum (The Forum on Education Abroad)
2004 The Forum on Education Abroad. Electronic document, http://www.forumea.org/, accessed 27 September.

Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad
2006 Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad. Electronic document, http://www.frontiersjournal.com/, accessed 15 February 2006.

Gmelch, George
2004 Let's Go Europe: What Student Tourists Really Learn. *In* Tourists and Tourism: A Reader. Sharon Bohn Gmelch, ed. Pp. 419-432. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Gmelch, Sharon Bohn
2004 Why Tourism Matters. *In* Tourists and Tourism: A Reader. Sharon Bohn Gmelch, ed. Pp. 3-21. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Goucher College
2006 Office of International Studies. Electronic document, http://www.goucher.edu/ x4737.xml, accessed 13 May.

Graburn, Nelson H. H., and Jafar Jafari
1991 Tourism Social Science. Annals of Tourism Research 18:1-11.

Gray, Kimberly S., Gwendolyn K. Murdock, and Chad D. Stebbins
2002 Assessing Study Abroad's Effect on an International Mission. Change 34(3):44-51.

Greenwood, Davydd J.
1977 Culture by the Pound: An Anthropological Perspective on Tourism as Cultural Commoditization. *In* Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Valene L. Smith, ed. Pp. 129-138. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
1989 Culture by the Pound: An Anthropological Perspective on Tourism as Cultural Commoditization. *In* Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism, 2nd ed. Valene L. Smith, ed. Pp. 171-185. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Grünzweig, Walter, and Nana Rinehart
2002 International Understanding and Global Interdependence: Towards a Critique of International Education. *In* Rockin' in Red Square: Critical Approaches to International Education in the Age of Cyberculture. Walter Grünzweig and Nana Rinehart, eds. Pp. 5-22. Münster, Germany: LIT.

Handelsman, Michael
2000 Culture and Customs of Ecuador. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Holy, Ladislav
1996 Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship. Chicago: Pluto Press.

Hulstrand, Janet
2006a Beyond Anecdote: Education Abroad Comes of Age. International Educator 15(1):52-55.
2006b Education Abroad on the Fast Track. International Educator 15(3):46-55.

ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites)
1999 Cuenca (Ecuador) No. 863. Electronic document, http://whc.unesco.org/archive/advisory_body_evaluation/863.pdf, accessed 7 October 2005.

IADB (Inter-American Development Bank)
2001 Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean: Comparative Statistics. Electronic document, http://www.iadb.org/mif/v2/remittancesstudies.html, accessed 7 November 2005.

IIE (Institute of International Education)
2005a Open Doors 2005: Host Regions of Study Abroad Students, 1993/94-2003/04. Electronic document, http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/?p=69707, accessed 28 June 2006.
2005b Open Doors 2005: Fast Facts. Electronic document, http://opendoors.iienetwork.org/, accessed 28 June 2006.

INEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos)
2001 VI Censo de Población y V de Vivienda: Resultados Definitivos. Electronic document, http://www.inec.gov.ec/, accessed 4 March 2005.
2006 Canasta Analítica Familiar Básica. Electronic document, http://www.inec.gov.ec/interna.asp?inc=enc_tabla&idTabla=645, accessed 28 February.

Jafari, Jafar
2001 The Scientification of Tourism. *In* Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century. Valene L. Smith and Maryann Brent, eds. Pp. 28-41. Elmsford, NY: Cognizant.

Jaramillo, Alfredo
1980 The Ecuadorian Family. *In* The Family in Latin America. Man Singh Das and Clinton J. Jesser, eds. Pp. 388-417. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Jokisch, Brad

2001 Desde Nueva York a Madrid: tendencias en la migración ecuatoriana. Ecuador Debate 54:59-83.

Jokisch, Brad, and Jason Pribilsky
2002 The Panic to Leave: Economic Crisis and the "New Emigration" from Ecuador. International Migration 40(4):75-102.

Keesing, Roger M.
1975 Kin Groups and Social Structure. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Kohn, Tamara
1997 Island Involvement and the Evolving Tourist. *In* Tourists and Tourism: Identifying with People and Places. Simone Abram, Jacqueline Waldren, and Donald V.L. Macleod, eds. Pp. 13-28. Oxford: Berg.

Krippendorf, Jost
1987 The Holiday Makers: Understanding the Impact of Leisure and Travel. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

Lea, John
1988 Tourism and Development in the Third World. New York: Routledge.

Learning Abroad Center (University of Minnesota)
2004 Outcomes of Study Abroad Bibliography. Electronic document, http://umabroad.umn.edu/ci/stats/resources/ outcomes.html, accessed 12 October.

Levy, Julie
2002 Host Culture Perception of a Study Abroad Program and Its Impact on the Community. Unpublished paper, School for International Training.

Logan, John R.
2001 The New Latinos: Who They Are, Where They Are. Electronic document, http://mumford1.dyndns.org/ cen2000/HispanicPop/HspReport/MumfordReport.pdf, accessed 26 February 2006.

Loveland, Elaina, and Christopher Murphy
2006 Leaders Speak Out. International Educator 15(1):30-35.

Marshall, Mac
1977 The Nature of Nurture. American Ethnologist 4(4):643-662.

Martin, Judith N.
1987 The Relationship between Sojourner Perceptions of Intercultural Competencies and Previous Sojourn Experience. International Journal of Intercultural Relations 11:337-355.

Mathieson, Alister, and Geoffrey Wall
1982 Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social Impacts. New York: Longman.

McFee, Malcom
1968 The 150% Man, a Product of Blackfeet Acculturation. American Anthropologist 70:1096-1103.

McLaren, Deborah
2003 Rethinking Tourism and Ecotravel. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

Miles, Ann
1994 Helping out at Home: Gender Socialization, Moral Development, and Devil Stories in Cuenca, Ecuador. Ethos 22(2):132-157.
1997 The High Cost of Leaving: Illegal Emigration from Cuenca, Ecuador and Family Separation. *In* Women and Economic Change: Andean Perspectives. Ann Miles and Hans Buechler, eds. Pp. 55-74. Society for Latin American Anthropology.
2004 From Cuenca to Queens: An Anthropological Story of Transnational Migration. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Miles, Ann, and Hans Buechler
1997 Introduction: Andean Perspectives on Women and Economic Change. *In* Women and Economic Change: Andean Perspectives. Ann Miles and Hans Buechler, eds. Pp. 1-12. Society for Latin American Anthropology.

Miller, Tom
2001 The Panama Hat Trail. Washington, DC: National Geographic.

Mintz, Sidney W., and Eric R. Wolf
1950 An Analysis of Ritual Co-Parenthood (Compadrazgo). Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 6(4):341-368.

Murphy, Christopher
2006 A Year of Education Abroad. International Educator 15(1):2.

NAFSA (NAFSA: Association of International Educators)
2006 Data Reveal Rise in Students Studying Abroad; Numbers of International Students Drop Slightly. International Educator 15(1):8-11.

Nash, Dennison
1976 The Personal Consequences of a Year of Study Abroad. Journal of Higher Education 47:191-204.
1981 Tourism as an Anthropological Subject. Current Anthropology 22:461-481.
1996 Anthropology of Tourism. Tarrytown, NY: Pergamon.

Nash, Dennison, and Valene L. Smith
1991 Anthropology and Tourism. Annals of Tourism Research 18:12-25.

Nazmi, Nader
2001 Failed Reforms and Economic Collapse in Ecuador. Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance 41:727-735.

Nuñez, Theron
1963 Tourism, Tradition, and Acculturation: Weekendismo in a Mexican Village. Ethnology 2:347-352.
1989 Touristic Studies in Anthropological Perspective. *In* Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism, 2nd ed. Valene L. Smith, ed. Pp. 265-274. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Office of Overseas Study (Indiana University)
2006 History of Overseas Study. Electronic document, http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/basics/history.shtml, accessed 29 June.

Ogra, Monica V.
1999 Participatory Natural Resource Management in India: A Study of Joint Forest Management (JFM). Master's thesis. University of Denver.

Owen, Diane L.

1999 International Students: Host Perceptions of Their Social Impact on Home, School and Community. Master's thesis, University of Victoria.

Picard, David
2002 The Tourist as a Social Fact. *In* The Tourist as a Metaphor of the Social World. Graham M.S. Dann, ed. Pp. 121-134. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.

Prensa Latina
2006 Ecuador's Dollarization: Going Much Worse. Electronic document, http://www.plenglish.com/article.asp?ID={D79BBE512588-43-C8-85CC-96E4FA01536D}&language= EN, accessed 10 January.

Rahier, Jean Muteba
1998 Blackness, the Racial/Spatial Order, Migrations, and Miss Ecuador 1995-96. American Anthropologist 100(2):421-430.

Redfield, Robert, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits
1936 Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation. American Anthropologist 38:149-152.

Robinson, Richard
1994 The Palace of the Inca at Tomebamba. History Today 44(1):62-63.

Secretaría Municipal
1932 Inauguración del Campo de Aviación 'Mariscal Lamar'. El Tres de Noviembre 10(77):912-913.

Silverman, Eric Kline
2000 Tourism in the Sepik River of Papua New Guinea: Favoring the Local over the Global. Pacific Tourism Review 4:105-119.

Smith, Melanie K.
2003 Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies. London: Routledge.

Smith, Valene L.
1977 Introduction. *In* Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism. Valene Smith, ed. Pp. 1-14. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

2001 Stone Age to Star Trek. *In* Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century. Valene L. Smith and Maryann Brent, eds. Pp. 15-27. Elmsford, NY: Cognizant.

Smith, Valene L., and Maryann Brent, eds.
2001 Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century. Elmsford, NY: Cognizant.

Sofield, Trevor H.B.
2001 Globalisation, Tourism and Culture in Southeast Asia. *In* Interconnected Worlds: Tourism in Southeast Asia. Peggy Teo, T.C. Chang, and K.C. Ho, eds. Pp. 103-120. New York: Pergamon.

Spindler, Louise S.
1977 Culture Change and Modernization: Mini-Models and Case Studies. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Spradley, James
1979 The Ethnographic Interview. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

SSRC (Social Science Research Council)
1954 Acculturation: An Exploratory Formulation. American Anthropologist 56:973-1000.

Stephenson, Skye
1999 Study Abroad As a Transformational Experience and Its Effect Upon Study Abroad Students and Host Nationals in Santiago, Chile. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad 5:1-38.

Stier, Jonas
2003 Internationalisation, Ethnic Diversity and the Acquisition of Intercultural Competencies. Intercultural Education 14:77-91.

Stronza, Amanda
2001 Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Ground for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives. Annual Review of Anthropology 30:261-283.

Sumka, Shoshanna
1999 The Impact of Study Abroad: Educational Travel as a Model for Responsible Tourism. Transitions Abroad 22(6):87-89.

2000 Study Abroad and Anthropology: Impacts on Ecuadorian Host Families. Practicing Anthropology 22(3):27-29.
2001 Host Family Experience: What is the Impact? What Does It Mean? Transitions Abroad 25(2):75-76.

Sweet Briar College
2006 Sweet Briar College Junior Year in France. Electronic document, http://www.jyf.sbc.edu/, accessed 29 June.

Tosun, Cevat
2001 Host Perceptions of Impacts: A Comparative Tourism Study. Annals of Tourism Research 29:231-253.

UNESCO
1999 Historic Centre of Santa Ana de los Ríos de Cuenca. Electronic document, http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/863, accessed 21 March 2005.

Urry, John
1990 The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Studies. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Van Broeck, Anne Marie
2001 Pamukkale: Turkish Homestay Tourism. *In* Hosts and Guests Revisted: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century. Valene L. Smith and Maryann Brent, eds. Pp. 161-174. Elmsford, NY: Cognizant.

Waldren, Jacqueline
1997 We Are Not Tourists—We Live Here. *In* Tourists and Tourism: Identifying with People and Places. Simone Abram, Jacqueline Waldren, and Donald V.L. Macleod, eds. Pp. 51-70. Oxford: Berg.

Wallace, Tim
2005 Tourism, Tourists, and Anthropologists at Work. NAPA Bulletin 23:1-26.

Walmsley, Emily
2001 Transformando los pueblos: La migración internacional y el impacto social a nivel comunitario. Ecuador Debate 54:155-174.

Walton, Whitney

2005 Internationalisation and the Junior Year Abroad: American Students in France in the 1920s and 1930s. Diplomatic History 29(2):255-278.

Weaver, Henry D.
1989 Research on U.S. Students Abroad, a Bibliography with Abstracts. Electronic resource, http://www.ciee.org/research_center/archive/CIEE_Education_Abroad_Informational_Documents/1989ResearchUsStudentsAbroad.pdf, accessed 31 October 2005.

Whitten, Norman E., Jr.
2004 Ecuador in the New Millenium: 25 Years of Democracy. Journal of Latin American Anthropology 9(2):439-460.

Wickens, Eugenia
2005 Cultural Heritage Tourism—Being, Not Looking: Beyond the Tourism Brochure of Greece. *In* Niche Tourism. Marina Novelli, ed. Pp. 111-119. Oxford: Elsevier.

Wiley, David
2001 Forty Years of the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays International Education Programs. *In* Changing Perspectives on International Education. Patrick O'Meara, Howard D. Mehlinger, and Roxana Ma Newman, eds. Pp. 11-29. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Wolf, Eric R.
1982 Europe and the People Without History. Berkeley: University of California Press.

EL OTRO LADO:
CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ABROAD ON HOST FAMILIES IN CUENCA, ECUADOR

_____

An Abstract of a Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Denver

_____

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

_____

by
Søren M Peterson
March 2007
Advisor: Tracy Bachrach Ehlers

Abstract

By focusing on the impacts on students, research on education abroad has been largely one-sided. In contrast, anthropological research indicates that cross-cultural encounters in the context of tourism (especially the cultural variety) lead to impacts on both hosts and guests. Therefore, the author contends that education abroad needs to consider the host perspective as well. To that end, this study takes the perspective of host families in Cuenca, Ecuador, and asks questions about why locals decide to host foreign students, what occurs in the host family-student encounter, and whether host families perceive a sociocultural impact.

Fieldwork involved participant-observation, key consultants, and semi-structured interviews with both hosts and guests, as well as an extensive review of the literature on education abroad and tourism. Through ethnographic analysis focusing on fictive kinship and economic exchange, the findings suggest that education abroad has various sociocultural (and economic) impacts on host families, especially children. Of these, some are temporary in nature, while others are more durable.